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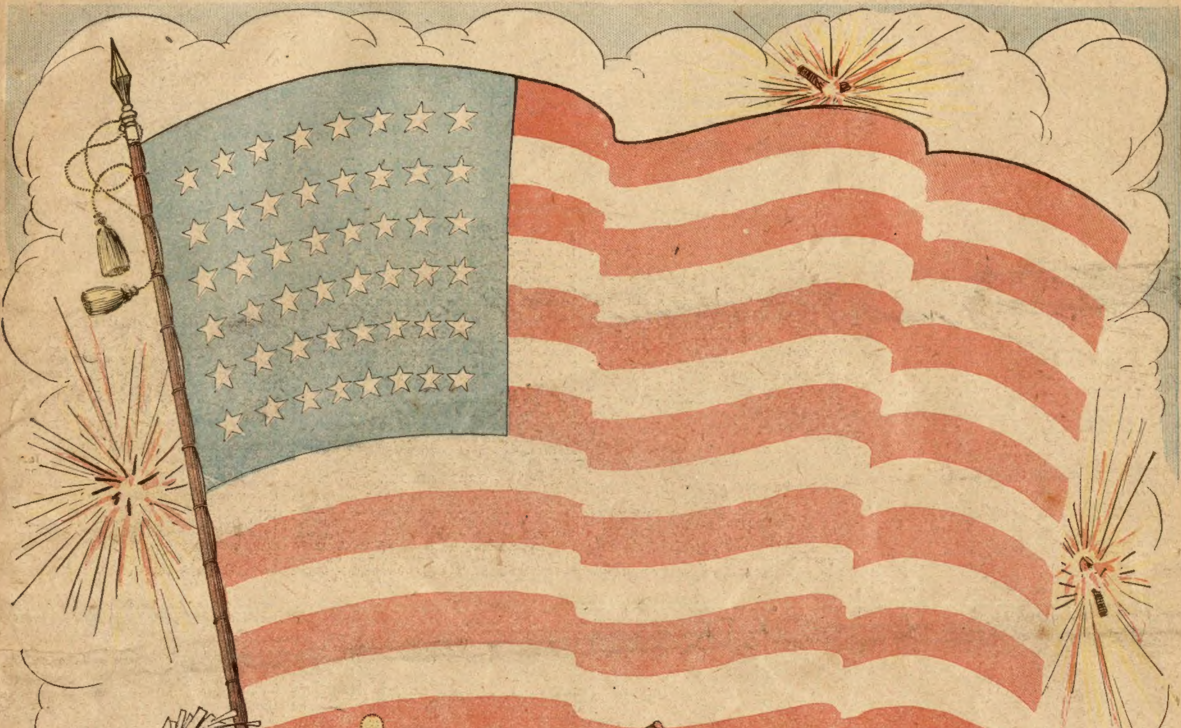

'Tis the star-spangled banner! O, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Jealous of Herself;

Or, BERENICE'S MYSTERIOUS FLIGHT

By AGNES DOROTHY CAMP

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CHAPTER XI.

THE Reverend Jonathan Fairchild was seated at his luxurious breakfast table, a look of genuine anxiety on his substantial features. The minister's wife, after playing at invalidism for so many years, was really and truly ill. Six days before she had been attacked by pleuro-pneumonia. The poor woman sincerely believed that hers was the only case of its kind, and weakly or stoutly, according to her temperature, refused to be treated in the usual way. Consequently, three nurses had been sent away, and three more had refused to stay with her. In despair the rector telegraphed Julia Parks.

"Come to your aunt," he said; "impossible to keep a nurse with her."

The servant poured out the minister's coffee, and hovered around, waiting for the word of dismissal.

"That will be all," said Mr. Fairchild, and he proceeded to open his mail.

The first letter was from his niece, which caused the portly chin to drop, and the wrinkles to form on the square forehead. The letter was posted from Julia's home, and not from the hospital where she was taking her probation course. It ran as follows:

"Dear Uncle Jonathan: Your telegram was forwarded to me, and I am so sorry for poor, dear auntie and you. Dad sent for me three days ago to nurse Dolly and Bella. Both have scarlet fever. Mother is so delicate and dad so busy I can't possibly leave them. But as a special favor I want you to send for my old nurse friend, the one I told you about who nursed Dolly at the seashore. She's a treasure, and auntie is sure to like her. I haven't heard from her in a long time, but she lives with her uncle, and will come if she is not engaged. I inclose her address. Don't let the name prejudice you. I don't believe she has a relative who is an actress. She never mentioned one to me. Amabel Marther is a charming woman and a competent nurse. Let us hear as often as you can how auntie is getting along.

"Your loving niece,
"JULIA."

The rector was not the kind to waste time in surmises. What did it matter who this nurse's relatives were if she was capable and willing to come to them. So he promptly wrote, requesting the services of Amabel Marther. Mr. Fairchild explained that he had heard of her through his niece, and begged her to come. He addressed the letter to Miss Marther, care of Stephen Marther, Elkwood, Green County, New York.

The following morning Berenice Marther was walking up and down the little walk outside her uncle's grounds, when the postman approached and handed her a letter. She recognized the Fairchild seal and her heart stood still.

Berenice had arrived from Manila only three days before, and it was too soon to have news of Jerome. What could it mean? She was looking refreshed after the voyage, and the dark lines had disappeared from under her eyes. Only that her figure was less round than formerly Berenice would have looked just as she did when Jerome parted from her over a year before.

Undoubtedly the letter was for Amabel. Had they been writing from time to time to inquire for news of her? Berenice had no compunctions in opening the missive. She read it carefully, word for word. For a moment she stood as though rooted to the spot. Then her face flushed crimson to the roots of her hair.

"I'll do it," she whispered, and rushed back to the house with a bound.

In a few minutes she unfolded her plan to Uncle Stephen, excitedly stroking his face the while.

"Now don't make a fuss, dear, or I shall be sorry I didn't run away again," she cried, giving the old man a final stroke, which happened to be the wrong way, and brought tears to his eyes.

"Yes, yes, my dear," he said. "You must have action of some kind; as well that as anything;" feeling his nose tenderly where Berenice had nearly stroked it off.

That same afternoon, Berenice, in a neat black frock and hat, wearing Amabel's old black coat with the Persian lamb collar, and carrying a modest suitcase, rang the bell at the Fairchild residence on Riverside drive.

A few minutes later she was ushered into the presence of the ponderous rector. Poor little Berenice, with her heart thumping loudly at her side and several lumps accumulating in her throat, was thankful for the breathing time she got while Mr. Fairchild adjusted his glasses for a better view of her.

The reverend gentleman looked searchingly at the girl. He was not prepossessed with her appearance. In fact, he was distinctly disappointed. With that shock of red hair, and, to say the least of it, the coarse complexion, the nurse was not, as Julia said, charming.

However, another nurse had come and gone since he had written to this one, and he hoped that there was something in her manner that would appeal to his wife. She was seriously ill and must not be irritated. He ordered the nurse, after a few words, in which Berenice appeared at a disadvantage, to remove her things, saying he would himself conduct her to his wife's room.

A few moments later the new attendant appeared in a dainty pink dress, very plain but beautifully starched and ironed. No cap or apron indicated the cut and dried nurse. The minister, with many misgivings, led the way to his wife's room.

Mrs. Fairchild was nearing a crisis in her malady, and was not an easy patient. She turned her glassy eyes and flushed cheeks on her husband.

"What do you want?" she asked, fretfully.

The rector motioned to the new nurse. Berenice was frightened into calmness, if such a state of mind is possible. She glided softly to the bed.

"Bring another pillow," she said to the housemaid, who had been left in charge of the patient. Then to the rector's wife she said, "Is there anything you would like to have?"

"Are you another nurse?" asked the sick woman, irritably. "You don't look like one."

Berenice put the fresh, cool pillow the maid had brought under the patient's head, and the hot, damp one before the open window.

"No, I'm not a nurse," she said, brightly, "but just a person to help you to get better."

"That feels good," murmured the poor woman, meaning the fresh pillow.

Berenice noticed that the room was heavy with the perfume of flowers. She removed several large vases filled with American beauty roses, retaining a few odorless blooms which she placed near the bed, where the patient could see them all the time.

"I'm glad you're not a nurse," said Mrs. Fairchild, faintly, from the bed. "Nurses are so rough. They are accustomed to paw over a lot of paupers in the hospitals, and all sick people are alike to them. When I feel a little stronger, you shall tell me where you learned to be so clever, if you are not a nurse."

The rector tiptoed from the room, afraid to break the spell.

"Julia was right," he thought; "she has a way with her, and Mary's going to like her."

Then he went back to the library to wait for the doctor's next visit. The poor rector felt sorely in the need of a ministering angel who could give words of cheer. Between his anxiety for his only child struggling between life and death on a pestilential island for the gratification of his parents' pride, and the care of a wife who seemed to have made up her mind to die, he was beside himself.

Meanwhile, Berenice had got over her first nervousness, and was moving about Mrs. Fairchild's room in her natural lithe and graceful manner. The absence of the stiff uniform and the bright dress and manner of the girl had completely won the sick woman. Berenice humored her and pretended to believe that hers was the only case of its kind and that it required different treatment from any other case that had come under her notice.

Berenice never irritated her patient by following the doctor to the next room and whispering loud enough to be heard but not understood by her patient. The girl discovered from the first that nurses were Mrs. Fairchild's pet aversion. So she assumed the part of a friendly caller, never ordering, but suggesting.

The doctor, when he made his first visit after Berenice's installation, was delighted in the change in his patient. He looked admiringly at the little nurse, and told the rector later that he had more hopes of Mrs. Fairchild's quick recovery than he had entertained before; but they still had an anxious time before them.

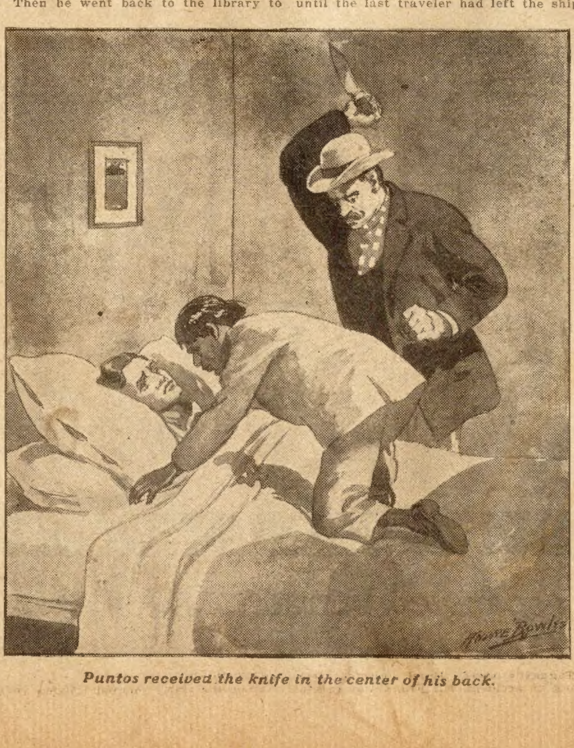
And the rector's wife, though gratified with the change of attendants, could hardly be expected to change her exacting disposition, particularly with a temperature fluctuating between a hundred and two and a hundred and five. Poor little Berenice had a weary trial, but she never forgot that her peevish charge was Jerome's mother and that she must show that Berenice Marther was more than an actress.

CHAPTER XII.

An incoming transport had ceased to be a novelty to Doctor Ferguson, nevertheless he hovered on the outskirts of the excited little gathering at the landing-stage. Beside the mail bags there was nothing of interest to him on this particular boat. The last one had brought a substitue for Jerome, who was now getting well rapidly.

The Doctor expected a staff of nurses, as a good many were ill, and some had left for home on leave. But it was too soon for them to arrive. He lit a cigar and leaned against a pile of fruit cases and watched the big transport swing past the lights of the bay and leisurely make her moorings, stirring the mud of the yellow, sharky haven as she dropped her anchor in ooze.

The usual flurry of landing troops and passengers followed. Ferguson stood until the last traveler had left the ship and the weary task of landing provisions, arms, and baggage was begun. Then he returned to his quarters to await the delivery of the mail. He found Jerome stretched comfortably in his coziest chair, an open book before him. As it had been too dark to read for more than an hour, the Doctor knew his friend was in a brown or a blue study.



Puntos received the knife in the center of his back.

"Hello!" he called, cheerily. "What are you doing here in the dark. Where's Puntos? Why didn't he get you a light?"

"As to the light, I didn't miss it," replied Jerome, stretching luxuriously. "But I've missed Puntos. He hasn't been near me today, and I confess the lad has become almost a necessity to me. I need him every few minutes."

Doctor Ferguson looked alarmed.

"That's strange," he said. "I'll send for him at once."

A man answered Ferguson's ring.

"Bring lights and send Puntos to me at once," the Doctor ordered.

The man withdrew and presently returned with the light. The Doctor always used lamps when he could get them. The man said that he had inquired all around, but could not find Puntos. If the Doctor wished he would send out a searching party, as the boy had not been seen all day.

Ferguson had noticed an uncanny watchfulness in the Filipino's actions ever since Berenice's departure for home, which had been five weeks previous. He said nothing to Jerome about it, or about their having seen Celasquex at the boat. The wound in the young chaplain's head had given the Doctor a great deal of trouble, and he was anxious not to irritate him. Neither had Jerome been told that Celasquex had instigated the attack on his life.

Jerome had never made an enemy in his life, and in his present condition it would have distressed him unnecessarily. Ferguson knew the temper of the Spaniard well enough to believe that he was plotting more deviltry, and Puntos, he fancied, had discovered it and was watching Celasquex. He told the man to make further inquiries about Puntos, but to avoid raising an alarm.

Ferguson did not agree with Puntos that Celasquex would leave a personal grudge to be settled by his henchmen. He believed that he would set a trap for Puntos, and so get the faithful native out of the way; and as soon as Jerome appeared in his old walks and rides, attack him as before—only the next time Celasquex would be there to see that there was no hitch.

In three weeks he had planned to return to the States. Both men had served their year, and were entitled to leave of absence. Jerome, on account of his health, would not return, but Ferguson liked the work and intended to come back.

The young fire-eater, Captain Bradley, had not been back in Manila many days before he groaned at the inactivity, and begged for new fields. As he was always a favorite and popular now for his recent exploits, he was given command of a small expedition for the subjection of an uprising of hillmen, supposedly under the control of Celasquex. If this feat was accomplished the Captain would make one of the party of homegoers.

The Doctor's reveries were disturbed by a deep sigh from Jerome.

"Better turn in, old man," he said. "Don't try to do too much to it for a while. Feel pretty tried, don't you?"

Jerome admitted that he was considerably done up, but there were other things bothering him; he wanted to get back to the States. Ferguson was anxious to keep his friend's mind from Puntos as long as possible, so he encouraged him to talk of home.

"If I were in your shoes," he laughed, "I'd be afraid to return to the home of my birth."

"How? What do you mean?" asked Jerome, curiously.

The Doctor eyed his companion narrowly. "Well, you say you're going to marry Nurse Bentley, if you can find her——"

"If she'll have me," interrupted the other. "I know I can find her. She can't elude me long."

"But suppose the fair Berenice holds you to a former promise? A breach of promise with her will offend the rector more than a marriage, and all this trip and long illness will be for naught."

Jerome looked perturbed, but he appeared not to see that his friend was observing him keenly.

"Do you think there is any likelihood of Berenice wanting to marry me?" he asked solemnly.

"Yes, if she thought you wanted to marry some one else. It would mean big headlines, big advertising—a snug compensation for her blighted hopes and broken heart. And I never heard of an actress who couldn't use both the money and the publicity."

The Doctor paused. His bantering tones, he supposed, had made clear to Jerome that he was only joking. But when he saw him sit bolt upright, grasping the arms of the chair, his face white and twitching, he was astonished.

"Forgive me, old man!" he blurted out. "I was talking nonsense."

"If you knew Berenice, as I know her," Jerome replied, sinking back into the chair, his lips quivering from weakness, "you'd know how your words malign her."

"Well, hang it, old man, I don't know

(Continued on page thirteen.)

The Ocean's Crucible

By *Mason Ray*

THE two survivors had drifted barely an hour beneath that stifling gray covering of fog. It seemed as if the meeting of cold and warm currents resulted in a battle of the elements that gave off swirling masses of damp, lung-obstructing smoke. It surrounded them in all directions, muffling their voices as if they spoke through cotton wool, yet each hung with an arm gripped around one supporting timber.

In the distance rising and falling wreckage marked the spot where the steamer had suddenly collided with a derelict and sunk like a plummet. She had been built of wood, built so long before that the outfitters in the spring were forced to add a beam here and a plank there, and then to cover the whole hazardous craft with shining coats of paint that passengers might be lured into parting from hard-earned dollars. In fact, she was but a tramp steamer, owned by the captain and carrying freight and goldseekers from Seattle to Nome. Whether others drifted on the open sea upborne by wreckage, or had managed to secure a lifeboat, these castaways knew not. In the swift cataclysm that destroyed their little world, C. J. Eldridge and Kenneth Hendee were tossed from the aft deck into the glassy sea. When they rose to the surface a mangled section of the ill-fated ship offered them a respite from death. For a confused, brain-maddened moment they hung, testing the power of the wreckage to carry double weight, and when the balance finally adjusted to their needs and immediate oblivion became a problem of suffering duration, each stared to note the other's identity.

But the fog-thickened night intervened, and only by voice did Kenneth Hendee know that his companion in misfortune was a lawyer who had intended to visit the much talked of gold fields of Alaska. Ship's gossip had made plain that the middle-aged barrister merely indulged in a pleasure trip. Kenneth mentally visualized the man's dignified bearing, his iron-gray hair and strong countenance, in which decisive character was cut deep by the acid of eventful years. Eldridge, in turn, recalled a boyishly young face, close curling flaxen hair, and deep blue eyes with an indirect gaze.

In the face of impending death they were disinclined to talk, but Eldridge finally questioned.

"Where are we?" said he.

"Somewhere about fifty north," Hendee answered. "I overheard one of the crew discussing our latitude just before the collision. He seemed to feel uneasy, thought the catpain had lost his bearings."

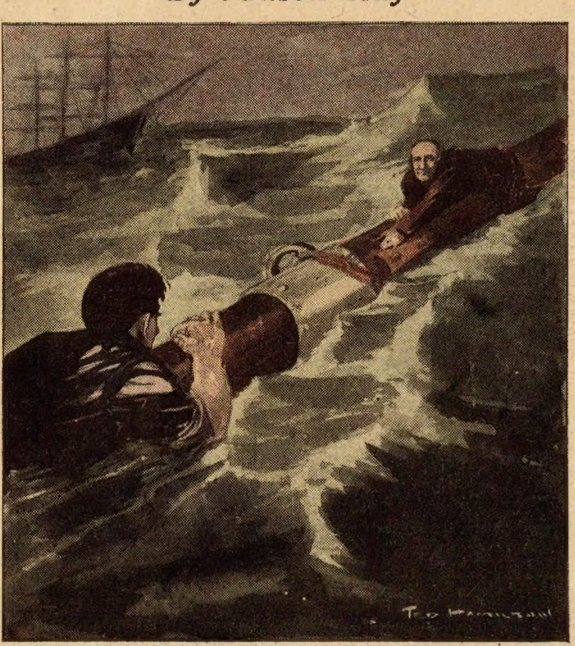
"He was doubtless right," commented Eldridge. "The Aleutians can't be far north," he added.

Hendee this time made no response. Even if the Aleutians loomed a mile distant it would profit them nothing. They were, however, many miles to the north and west, and the wrecked men were numb with cold. Their problem was merely one of duration, and Eldridge again voiced a query.

"Do you think we'll last till daylight?" he questioned. In the same tone he might have quizzed his family physician regarding the duration of an incurable malady. Being confronted with death had not robbed him of tranquillity, and, since there was no chance of rescue, he longed for oblivion as a tired child desires sleep.

"It's coming now," the younger man observed. "See, the density of this murk is changing. Remember, in this latitude, the sun rises early in midsummer. Possibly," said he, hopefully, "a whaler may pick us up before our strength gives out."

The lawyer maintained silence. He believed Hendee cheated himself with unfounded reasoning, that he cherished false hope of ultimate rescue. As for the suffused light he knew it was not coming day. Whatever the strange, glowing, and slowly growing radiance might be was a mystery, but he was certain that the hour yet lacked midnight. So he kept his pessimistic fears to himself, for the sake of the fair, boyish man with the pleasing countenance who shared his fate. On shipboard he had studied the troubled countenance intently, because he had recognized the face—knew that Kenneth Hendee was a much wanted criminal. During the past year detectives had hounded this accused slayer of a bank president across two continents. The youthful absconder and murderer was supposed to use his ill-gotten wealth in assuming many disguises and constant, erratic travel. Eldridge, the experienced jurist, had noted the intangible expression of the hunted man about the officers' quarry, had recalled the oft-pictured face of the fugitive, and quickly realized that he was in the actual presence of President Weber's murderer. But, to his surprise, Hendee's fair face lacked something the noted criminal attorney expected to find in the facial mask that covered a guilty soul. Instinctively he felt attracted to the man who seemed to possess the gift of undying youth. Without reason he trusted the unshaven, high-bred face, prematurely lined with care. Now it appeared an eccentric twist of events that doomed the criminal and prosecutor of crime to die together.



"Do you think we'll last till daylight?"

For an eternity the castaways drifted before a light wind that out and dispelled the fog until stars dimly gemmed the sky. Without speech their thoughts shuttled back and forth from past to present, chiefly dwelling on trifling incidents, recalling snatches of idle talk, half dazed, unthinkingly watching for the lights of any passing ships, partly apprehensive concerning the chance appearance of sharks rumored to trail in the wake of shipwreck, and through all rigidly clinging to their slight support with the instinct of drowning men.

As they thus idly and musingly drifted like people experiencing the half-waking condition of delirium, their staring eyes beheld a marvelous transformation scene. As by magic the dark surface of the sea flamed with unearthly splendor and roused them to alert observation. Like the unrolling of a mighty canvas painted with Dante's vision of Hades, they saw from horizon to horizon, an ocean of fire that glowed with sullen, sulphurous gleam, flamed dully like waning light then burst into brilliant radiance that rippled in gentle, fiery swells.

"My God," cried Hendee, "it's like an aquatic inferno! It's enough to drive one mad."

"Phosphorescence," Eldridge explained briefly, but his own gaze was fixed in round-eyed terror on the frightful spectacle. Glancing toward Hendee he was able to see in that unearthly light an upturned face that reminded him of a dead face he had once seen by the light of a lightning's flash. For, floating on a level with that strangely illumined brine, his companion's countenance took on a ghastly tint, and presently his lips again moved, voicing his terror.

"You'll despise me for a coward," said he, "but that hell of blazing water is awful. I've lost my nerve."

"Fear is a form of hysteria," commented the even tones of Eldridge. "Remember this is nothing but a display of marine insects. It's unusual to find them so far north, but they are no more wonderful than a flight of fireflies."

"It's the night, the imminence of death, the horror of such a scene before passing into eternity," explained Hendee. "Don't think I fear death or especially value life," he continued. "Life holds nothing for me but the hunted existence of an outlaw."

"Yes, I know," Eldridge admitted with compassion. "I recognized you on the steamer, noted that scar on the palm of your hand described in circulars."

"Made by the slip cf a long-coveted jackknife when I was a boy," the fugitive told him. "My family was poor and knives a luxury. After my own kiddy grew to whittling age I saw to it that he had the best four-bladed knife in Taggart's store. Ethel objected, fearing an accident, but Frank was careful. Besides, he's eight years old this month."

"My two children are grown up and married," confided the other, with his eyes turned toward the sea of fire. "Julia, my wife, and I are alone. When I reached home we were to have celebrated our thirtieth anniversary. You see life has given me a goodly portion of happiness. I should be content to die; but I'm not. I want home, home and Julia."

The pale radiance of the sea revealed to Kenneth Hendee the countenance of a man able by deep experience to sympathize and understand. It inclined him to unpremeditated mention of his reason for flight.

"Before I die," said he in a burst of self-expression, "I want you to know that I am innocent. In the presence of this frightful display, and on the eve of eternity, I am telling you the truth when I say that W. T. Weber looted his own bank. I had suspected him for months. And when I trapped him in the act, he caught up the office revolver and shot himself before my face. Too late I snatched the smoking weapon from his hand, and at that moment, Horton, the teller, and Dolan, the watchman, rushed in and saw the tableau. To them it looked as if I had killed the bank president; when shortages were uncovered I was considered a defaulter. Detectives nosed out the fact that I had lost by buying margin on Blue Steel. Altogether, circumstantial evidence piled up so strong that Ethel gave me her own little fortune and urged me to leave the country. I fled. For a year I've moved from place to place, and this trip, I intended to hide in the Alaskan gold fields while I earned something to replace my wife's money. Tonight, in the midst of this ghastly inferno, I repeat that I'm neither a murderer nor thief. I have spoken the truth."

"Yes," said Eldridge, "you speak the truth. Dying men are not liars. I believe you."

To the hunted outlaw these words were music. His eyes glistened with the first tears of that fateful day, dimmed until he barely discerned an object that was still more terrifying than the incandescent sea. Their veering wreckage turned until, almost within hailing distance, they perceived the ghostly hulk of a vessel whose phantom-like masts and rigging were sheathed with luminous fire. With fantastic abandon the blue flames raced up and down the spars, outlined the rigging, and circled the rail until the whole formed the brilliant phantom of a barque burned on the pall of night.

"See that!" cried Hendee. "Good God, what is it?"

"Another illusion," the lawyer told him. "It's St. Elmo's fire—a meteoric display. Has probably come about because of the phosphorescence in the sea. And it's a good omen, according to sailors, for there are the two flames, Castor and Pollux."

"But the ship," shouted Hendee, rousing to the situation, "surely that's not a specter of this awful night! That fire must follow masts of wood, ropes of hemp!"

"It does," said Eldridge, "but don't build hope on that, my poor boy. Don't you see it's a derelict? It's no doubt, the very hulk that sunk our boat. There's no one aboard to send us aid, and we could no more swim to that derelict than to Nome."

"We will swim to it," Hendee said, vehemently. "I'll help you. Come!"

"Save yourself," Eldridge told him. "I'm done for."

"No," cried Hendee, with brusqueness, "you're going to live! Do you hear? You're going back to Julia, your wife. We'll take our time—till daylight if need be—and swim to the wreck. Once there you can rest. And we'll be safe. We'll be sighted and taken ashore. Come!"

His voice was crisp with masterful decision; fear had dropped from him like a cast-off garment and he was alive with youthful energy. Swimming to Eldridge he instructed him to place a right hand on his left shoulder. Again the lawyer refused to become a burden, but Hendee wrenched the lawyer's feeble hold from the bit of wreck and placed the nerveless hand in position. Then, inch by inch, he moved toward his destination. His faint strokes increased in vigor as blood began to circulate in his numb body. Foot by foot he steadily advanced, while the laboring breath pounded in his chilled lungs. Once, twice, thrice he swallowed unfortunate gulps of sea-water and almost went down to the black depths with his precious charge. One thought buoyed him up at the crucial moment: this man believed in him, believed him innocent, when the world declared him guilty. He would save his life, save him for that waiting Julia. Rod by rod he crossed the fading sea, until he felt the hand on his shoulder relax. That was ominous. It meant defeat. Suddenly, treading water, he turned and viciously struck his companion a stinging blow.

"Keep your grip!" he shrilled. "Do you want to drown me? Keep your grip!"

His ruse succeeded. The seeming indignity roused the swooning lawyer and tightened his hold until Hendee reached the hull. Almost exhausted he sought some means to climb aboard with his now unconscious comrade. The sides were coated with slime, but below the bowsprit the swimmer discovered the customary stay-chains within reach and leading to the projecting mast. For a time he rested, holding the dead weight of Eldridge in his arms. Then he managed to perform a task that seemed superhuman—the task of pulling himself, thus burdened, to the beam above, then crawling its length to the deserted craft. When he finally reached the salt-sprayed, dew-moistened deck he dropped down violently trembling, his muscles lax and powerless, his mind a blissful daze, scarce realizing the magnitude of his accomplished deed.

High-shot strands of crimson from the rising sun fanned out in the east when Hendee roused and stiffly scrambled to his feet. His wondering gaze swept over the weather-beaten deck before he remembered; then he turned to Eldridge still lying in his wet clothes on the planking. The lawyer's face was excessively pale, but he had evidently recovered from his swoon only to join his rescuer's deep sleep of exhaustion.

"Come," said Hendee, "no sleeping in wet garments."

He forced the older man to rise, then assisted him to march slowly backward and forward on the sun-baked deck until the exercise and sunshine warmed their sluggish blood. About them the untenanted sea shimmered in lustrous hues, and the sun mounted high while they discussed their probable position and chance of rescue; but only by a long look in Hendee's blue eyes and a convulsive clasp of the hand was the lawyer permitted to give thanks for the night's superman accomplishment.

After a time they entered a stuffy cabin, and, on padded lockers, again indulged in dreamless sleep. When at last overtaxed nature had taken its toll of slumber, the afternoon was far spent and hunger accompanied with raging thirst assailed their senses. Eagerly they searched the long-deserted galley for abandoned food. Finding nothing, they explored the lower deck. The hull rode low on the sea, and was, they discovered, heavily ballasted with bilge water. A huge jagged opening in the side barely above the ripples of the ocean spoke eloquently of former disaster. Doubtless the crew had supposed the vessel about to sink. Possibly she had been impaled on a treacherous reef and was later set free by fantastic chance of wind or tide, but only a miracle had kept her steadily adrift for leagues. On her lower deck was the unjettisoned part of a cargo of rusting machinery. Some of it had rolled to the opposite side from the break, thus tilting the ragged opening above the sea line. But nothing in all the disorderly ship proved to be edible. Not a drop of fresh water remained in the casks.

"The crew provisioned their boats

with everything that was left on board," surmised Eldridge. "It argues that they were far from any port when their vessel struck a snag." He spoke with effort. Already his tongue was swelling with the terrible thirst that succeeds an immersion in brine.

As men will who are desperately situated they discussed every plan for rescue. Tried to rig up moldy bits of canvas to rotten lines for a sail, studied the feasibility of building a raft, contrived a flag of distress that fluttered from a mast head. But neither that night nor the following day did their water-logged craft move under its tattered sail. In that continued calm the derelict was as motionless as a painted ship on a painted sea. Once again the hapless castaways slept on the cushioned lockers. The few cabins were foul with bad air and unfit for occupancy, so they opened transoms and doors to the larger room and spent the night fitfully sleeping. Then, suddenly, they were aroused by the impact of a shot, and saw that they had slept far into the day. Again they felt their hulk shudder under the force of a shot, and rushed on deck. Eldridge guessed the truth.

"It's a derelict destroyer," he called to Hendee. "Some of the sailors must have been saved after all and reported the cause of our wreck."

Immediately astonished officers distinguished their frantic signals and sighted their inadequate flag. A few minutes later they were welcomed on board a San Francisco revenue cutter, and heard the captain's account of home-bound survivors from their wreck who had been picked up in an open boat. These were seamen who had managed to secure a lifeboat washed from the steamer, and who were on board a Pacific liner when they hailed the cutter to make report.

"I take for granted that you'll again slip out of sight," Eldridge remarked to his fellow voyager, as they neared the American shore. His eyes, however, questioned and his glance was penetrating, as if anxious; for contradiction.

"Never," said Hendee. "Being a hunted man gets on the nerves. And there's the boy and Ethel. I must see my folks." Already his fugitive air had vanished. His once indirect glance was level and steady.

Something in the lawyer's strong face hinted of approval, but he made no comment. Neither did he offer cash from from his telegraphed funds to the man who had saved his life. Hendee had sufficient sea-soaked currency to pay his fare to Denver, his home city, and that sufficed. The attorney likewise boarded a train, but he traveled in the parlor car of a fast express, while his late comrade progressed at a slower pace in humbler quarters.

But even slow trains arrive, with friends waiting at the terminals, and delayed justice sets up its court. Therefore, Hendee was welcomed by his smiling Ethel and the boy, and finally saw the dawn that ushered in his trial for the murder of W. T. Weber. The assembled crowd that formed a fitting background, the grouped counsels and reporters at small tables, the huge paintings of Truth and Justice behind the bench, but, most of all, the judge at his desk seemed to the prisoner the phantasmagoria of a dream. For, presiding at the judge's bench, with no glance of recognition in his keen gray eyes, was C. J. Eldridge, his comrade of the sea."

During the tedious process of securing twelve unprejudiced men from the panel, Judge Eldridge seemingly maintained an unbiased interest. And, throughout that time, the prisoner wondered if the self-contained jurist recalled his assertion of innocence, if he remembered having expressed faith in his honesty. Angrily he kept aloof from the one who was apparently a foul-weather friend and a fair-weather enemy. He had read in a Denver paper of his own shipwreck and consequent return home, but not a reporter had linked his name with that of the jurist now presiding over his trial. Instead, a column had reported the return of Judge Eldridge from travels in Alaska and the West. Evidently the lawyer had suppressed the story of his shipwreck; therefore the reader never dreamed that Judge Eldridge of the Alaskan travels and his companion during that hour in the aquatic inferno were identical. Neither to his wife, who was draining her private fortune in his behalf, not to his attorney, who labored at overwhelming disadvantage, would his pride permit him to mention his former meeting with the man sitting in judgment behind the bar.

Over and again the familiar evidence was thrashed to glean a grain of truth. The bank watchman and the teller reiterated the story of Weber's murder. The bucketshop proprietor was forced to prove Hendee's speculation in Blue Steel, and this suggested that other shops might have been equally favored. Twelve weary veniremen listened day after day until the massed evidence fairly clogged their brains. Patiently they listened to the clash of attorneys, the repeated testimony of reluctant witnesses, and finally to the exhaustive summing up of the lawyers on opposing sides. Then, from big John Horton, foreman of the jury, to Pat Dubbs, clerk of the court, every soul in the courtroom and the city knew that there could be but one verdict and that —"guilty." Therefore, little attention was given to the judge when he commenced his clear-toned charge to the jury. But presently his audience noted that Judge Eldridge was quoting decisions in singular cases, cases that had been founded on circumstantial evidence. By a transition so adroitly managed that it was barely marked, the jurors found themselves listening to the brief, graphic story of a wreck at sea. In the still room a breathless crowd absorbed the jurist's word picture of a phosphorescent sea, a burning expanse upon which drifted two hopeless voyagers. He reproduced in detail each incident of that night of horror, and etched the whole upon the awful majesty of that boundless flame. His hearers saw the drowning men and heard, word for word, Hendee's declaration of innocence and his aged comrade's reply. They accompanied Hendee through the ordeal of swimming to the distant derelict picked out in dancing fire against the black night. They watched his almost superhuman effort to climb aboard, burdened by the unconscious form of the man he had saved. At this point the judge abruptly paused.

"Gentlemen," said he, in his usual curt manner, "that fugitive was the prisoner at the bar; his companion was myself. He was then tried in a crucible of liquid fire. He considered himself a dying man, and dying men are not liars. With apologies to the State's attorney, I claim the right to incorporate this evidence in my charge. You may retire."

Amid profound silence the jury rose and followed a bailiff to a near-by room. Without speaking John Horton glanced questioningly at each of his associates and received a nod in reply.

"Hold on!" cried he to the bailiff, and inserted a huge foot in the way of a closing door. "Take us back to the judge. We've reached a decision. We're all agreed."

That explains why twelve men again trailed, toe to heel, at the rear of the court officer when he re-entered the courtroom. With military precision the entire panel lined up before Judge Eldridge and waited.

"Gentlemen," said the judge, "what is your verdict?"

"Not guilty," responded the deep-chested tones of John Horton.

"Not guilty," echoed each juror down the line.

"You have done well, gentlemen," said the judge.

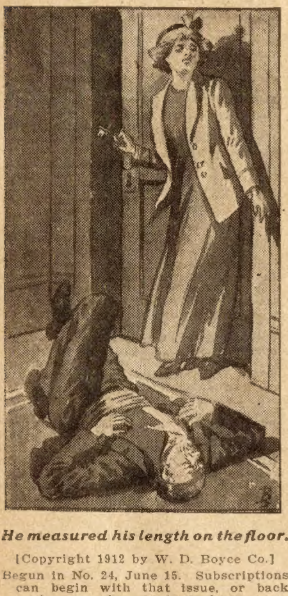
"An extraordinary, irregular proceeding," growled the district attorney.

But no one listened to his just complaint. Attention was focused on the happy face of Kenneth Hendee and the radiant Ethel.

"That may be a bit irregular," admitted John Horton, "but it's a decision in equity."

Yost Middleton's Wife;

Or, A WELL KEPT SECRET ❧ ❧ By T. C. HARBAUGH



He measured his length on the floor.

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CHAPTER IX.

A DESPERATE CARD.

MR. BARRY STOKES, at home once more in his little room, was congratulating himself upon the luckiest escape of his life. Indeed, he had not fully recovered. Confronted by Mason Marx in the house which he had transformed into a trap for Yost Middleton, he had given himself up for lost, for the demeanor of the man who had covered him with a revolver was not indicative of mercy.

He had hoped and prayed for the coming of his intended victim, and when he heard footsteps on the stairs he was absolutely sure that Middleton had received his decoy letter and had walked into the snare. It was in this situation that we last saw him.

Mason Marx had lowered the revolver and was gazing at the door which would open to reveal who had entered the house. Stokes, the plotter, breathed freer. The sounds came nearer, the knob turned, and both men seemed to hold their breath. It was not Middleton.

A change passed swiftly over Mason Marx's countenance. The man who had broken the spell was gaunt and lean. His eyes had the looks of a hungry wolf, his ill-fitting garments clung closely to his figure, and he threw a quick, almost lunatic, glance around the room. Marx uttered an exclamation.

It was echoed by the man near the door, and the next moment he was wildly clutching the hands of Stokes's enemy.

"I've found you at last!" exclaimed the stranger. "Been looking for you in every nook and cranny of this accursed city."

"Jack!" responded Marx.

"What's left of him," was the answer. "I've been in the hands of the Apaches of Paris. I've haunted the sewers to get rid of them, but I'm out at last!"

There was something mysteriously familiar in the speaker's face to the staring Stokes. Where had be seen that woe-begone man? His brain worked rapidly, and all at once light broke upon it.

That man had sat near Marx during the trial for murder. Stokes had seen him there. He had remained by him through the exciting proceedings, had watched over him like a hawk, and it was in that courtroom beyond the sea that Stokes had last gazed upon that face. It is an ill wind that blows no good, and suddenly the menaced valet took advantage of the situation.

With another glance at the two men he made a leap for the door. Tearing it open with the mien of a crazed man, he flew down the stairs and out into the night. He ran as if a legion of furies was at his heels, nor did he pause till he had locked his door behind him and fallen white-faced and breathless, into a chair.

What a narrow escape!

An hour passed before he got second wind. The street below had grown still. He wondered if Middleton had gone to the trap and encountered Mason Marx. He finally shook off his fear and strengthened his nerves from a bottle which he took from a little curtained sideboard. As his nerves readjusted themselves he laughed.

"What a fool I am!" he said aloud. "I might have taken another advantage of the situation and fallen upon Marx while he was in the grip of that haggard wretch."

It was too late now. He knew that he had more than one enemy in Paris. He had Marx and Middleton to contend with. If he could set them against each other he might reap a rich harvest, but could he do so? There was Blake Abernathy to whom he had sold the secret of Edith's whereabouts, and that man might play his hand before he could be interfered with.

The time had come for quick action. It was now near midnight. Barry Stokes took a revolver from a drawer and slipped from his lodgings. The streets were nearly deserted in that quarter of the city. Now and then a cab rolled by, trailing its noises in the distance, and he was comparatively alone.

The Hotel Pictus was squares away. His prey was there, perhaps wrapped in slumber, but what of that? A desperate man playing for high stakes, one of which is surpassing beauty, stands but little on ceremony. It was thus with Barry Stokes.

The rattling cab which he hailed transported him to the square in which the Hotel Pictus stood, and he alighted with careful glances around. There was now little about him to denote that he was the one-time valet of the rich American.

He entered the hostelry by a side door and found the guard half asleep at his post. The man, under his directions and a plentiful share of Blake Abernathy's francs, enabled him to pass up the stair, after having ascertained the exact location of Lemora's chamber.

The door of Edith's apartments he found unlocked. Perhaps Mrs. Middleton was not in, but he cared little whether she was or not. He turned the knob and entered. Accustomed to the general plans of Parisian hotel apartments, he crossed the main room and paused at a door which indicated a sleeping chamber.

A dim light burned beyond the door. Barry Stokes listened a moment and then twisted the knob. The door yielded and the plotter walked forward. The next second he stopped as though he had come face to face with fate itself.

Reclining in a chair sat a young girl half asleep. A book which had ceased to interest had fallen from her hands and lay at her slippered feet. The large blue eyes opened slowly, and all at once Lemora was on her feet.

Stokes sprang forward and seized her wrist, at the same time whispering a dire threat into her ears.

"Your mother——"

"Mamma must be out yet!" broke in Lemora, as if trying at the same time to place the face that almost touched her own blanched cheek.

"Yes, I know, and that is why I've come," put in Stokes. "She has sent for you."

"For me?" echoed Lemora.

"For you, Lemora. You know me now?"

"You are Stokes——"

"Your mother's friend and yours. You are dressed. Come. Edith needs you badly, badly."

"But where is she?"

There was a lingering doubt in voice and look.

"Time presses and the demand is urgent."

He seemed to have broken down the last barrier of suspicion. The beautiful girl began to prepare for flight, flight with this hawk of the night.

Stokes escorted her hurriedly from the hotel. He handed her into the waiting cab and took his seat beside her. The lights showed him how white and fearsome she was. The dove was in his snare; he had played a hand which did him credit. He had caught the one object of his cleverness and as the vehicle rolled over the stones of Paris, he contented himself with watching her as though a breath of wind might blow her out of his trap. On, on went the noisy cab.

"Where is Edith?" suddenly asked Lemora, turning her face toward her abductor.

"It is not far now," was the reply. "Edith is waiting impatiently for you, child."

Calmed by this outrageous lie, Lemora fell back again and closed her eyes. The vehicle stopped at last. Stokes, gloating over the success of his villainy, got out and helped Lemora to alight. The wandering eyes of the young girl looked wildly around.

"She is waiting in this house," whispered Stokes, leading his captive across the pave. "It won't be long now, child."

They went up a dim flight of steps together. Stokes opened a door and pushed his charge into a small room. He switched on the light and looked at his prisoner.

"Mamma is not here!" exclaimed Lemora, as her cheeks blanched again.

Then it was with all the audacity of a finished villain that the man threw off all disguises.

"She is not here," cried he. "It was a pretty trick, don't you think, girl?"

Lemora could not speak.

"There was no other way to save you," he went on.

"To save me from whom?" echoed the staring girl in the chair.

"From your mother's enemy and yours."

"But I don't understand. You are Barry Stokes, once papa's valet, and I have heard Edith say that she had no love for you?"

"We'll not discuss this point," laughed Stokes. "If it is to be discussed at all, we'll postpone the time."

The light which at this flashed up in Lemora's eyes he never forgot. It came back to him when his life was ebbing and his bark was putting out into the dark which all humanity dreads.

"I will not remain here!" cried Lemora, springing to her feet, and facing him with the look of an offended empress. "You are not my friend nor mamma's. I never liked you, Barry Stokes. You were Yost Middleton's paid spy. I am going out!"

Her quick movement toward the door was checked by the hand which encircled her wrist like a bracelet of steel.

"When you leave this house," he leered, "it will be as the bride of Barry Stokes!"

CHAPTER X.

A GULF STILL BETWEEN.

The consternation of Edith Middleton when she opened the door of Lemora's sleeping chamber and found it untenanted cannot be described. For several moments she could not credit the evidence of sight, but the truth gradually dawned upon her. The girl was gone!

She looked in vain for a note, but not a scrap of writing rewarded her pains. The whole thing was incomprehensible. The mystery deepened and hung about Edith like an impenetrable cloud. At first she believed that the hand of her husband, whom she knew to be in Paris, was in the work; then she dismissed this theory and drifted farther and farther from the shores of probability.

Surely Lemora had not abandoned her of her own will. The young girl had never been made the sharer of her (Edith's) one great secret, but she had never manifested any desire to know it. Something had happened to deprive her of the companion of her vengeance hunt, and at last Edith went back to her own chamber to puzzle over the inscrutable enigma.

She had set Girard Legeorge upon the trail of Blake Abernathy; she had seen the face of her own husband in the door of a public cab, and she knew that Barry Stokes was in the French metropolis. Hedged in by thoughts of this kind, Middleton's wife spent some hours of unknowable agony.

When she investigated no one about the Hotel Pictus could give her a scintilla of information. The guard whose palm had been crossed by Stoke's gold kept sealed lips. He remained true to his purchaser, and Edith turned away believing in his honor.

All the next day she roamed the streets and byways of Paris seeking for a clew to Lemora. In her eager hunt she almost forgot her sworn mission; her husband passed out of her mind, and the man whom she had found at Lemora's feet in the hotel she put aside for the present.

She was returning homeward slowly through one of the public parks when she saw a man whose back was to her. She bade the driver halt, and the next moment she was among the trees. The park, which was brilliantly lighted and filled with a crowd of gay Parisians, lost all attraction for her. She saw only the one man. The contour of that figure had been ever in her eyes.

When the man turned and revealed the face of her husband, Edith drew back and hid herself behind a bush. The light of the many swaying bulbs fell upon his face. She centered her intense look upon it and clasped her hands upon her bosom. It was the same face, but how changed!

Edith Middleton looked long and hard at it, and thought she could read forgiveness in the lonely eyes, but she did not move. In three steps she could have been at his side, even in his arms, but still she held aloof. This man had thrust her aside; he had refused to believe in her protestations of innocence, had set between them a barrier which still existed, and, though she loved him still, she clung to her secret which she could have revealed, perhaps, to waiting ears.

Middleton strolled slowly through the park, and, Edith threw herself upon his trail. Did he know that Lemora had disappeared? She followed him to the edge of the garden and saw him enter a cab. There was another one near by, and when Middleton's cab moved off Edith sprang into the nearest one and bade the man follow the vehicle she pointed out. At least she would track him to his hotel, and the future could take care of itself.

Strangely Middleton's cab suddenly turned toward the purlieus of Paris. It dived recklessly into the darknesses of the city where the terrible Apaches have sway. Edith's brain reeled when she noted this. What was taking him into that dangerous quarter where one's life if he have ten francs on his person is not safe?

All at once Middleton's cab came to an abrupt halt. The driver leaped from his seat and began to examine one of the front wheels. The cab had broken down.

It was the old trick. The driver was in league with the Apaches, and in a moment they would swarm from some adjacent den for plunder, if nothing worse. The terror came almost before Edith could conceive it. A door was thrown open beyond the pave and four men rushed to the feast.

Edith saw the door of her husband's cab jerked open, she heard his demand to know what was taking place, but he was answered by jeers, oaths, and cries to deliver up all valuables on his person. The driver of the cab disappeared in the mouth of an alley.

Edith Middleton commanded her man to rush forward. He grinned from his seat and shrugged his shoulders. In another instant the door of Edith's vehicle flew open and she was in the street.

Middleton had been pulled from his cab and was struggling with the human vermin of the slums. He was strong and alert, and swung his cane heavily against the faces of his assailants. Tney recoiled for a moment before the American's resistance, but came again in renewed fury. Edith saw her husband's danger. He was thrown to the ground, and the Apaches fell upon him with murder in every movement of their strong bodies.

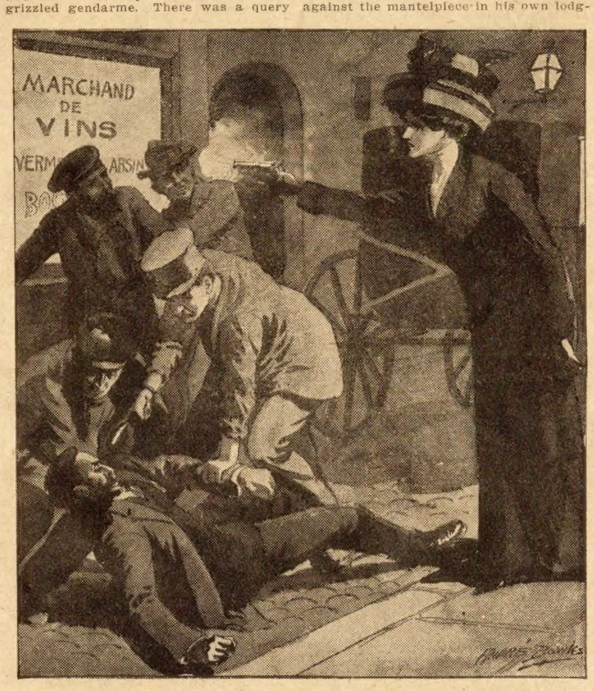
There was the flash of a knife in the subdued light, the cry of some one struck by the glittering blade, and then the villains fought for the spoils. All this did not seem to occupy the space of a second.

Edith Middleton, with a revolver in her gloved hand, dashed among the midnight vultures. They were unaware of her presence until the weapon flashed in their faces. When they looked they saw the figure of a beautiful woman, whose eyes rivaled the gleam of the weapon she gripped, and the cowards fell away, dragging after them one whose face was torn by a bullet.

Yost Middleton lay unconscious at his wife's feet. The last Apache had slunk back to his den with the plunder of the assault, and Edith was alone with her husband. It was their first meeting since the disowning in the elegant home beyond the sea.

She stooped and looked into the deathly white face which the light revealed. Her hand sought his heart, and a slight flutter was her reward.

At that moment a noise startled her and she looked up into the face of a grizzled gendarme. There was a query in the eyes already fixed upon her, and Edith pointed to the form on the ground.



Edith Middleton dashed among the vultures.

"The Apaches, madame?" said the man.

"Yes, the demons of Paris."

"Your husband, or your escort, madame?"

To this Edith made no reply. Her hand lost itself in one of Middleton's inner pockets and found an ivory card-case which she opened.

"Madame," pursued the gendarme, but Edith jerked the object from his reach.

"This gentleman is Monsieur Middleton," she said, "Hotel Murat. It is for you to see that he is taken thither."

She commanded in tones that startled the officer. He was not accustomed to be thus addressed by a woman.

"Yonder is my cab," she continued. "My driver, fortunately, is not in league with the Apaches." She called her cabman, and the vehicle rolled forward.

Middleton, still with closed eyes, was lifted from the ground and placed in the cab. Edith got in after him. The gendarme took his place beside the driver, and the cab squeaked away.

In the darkness Edith held the limp hand which she had taken at the altar years before. Not a sound passed her lips. She pillowed her husband's head on her bosom and remained silent.

The cab at last rattled to the curb before Middleton's hotel. As the door was opened by the gendarme, Edith pressed the hand she had never relinquished during the whole journey, and her lips touched the white temple which the lights revealed.

She saw her husband carried into the foyer of the hotel. In another moment she beheld the old gendarme bowing and scraping before her.

"Monsieur has revived, madame," said he, with a grin of pleasure. "I have mentioned you to him."

Edith kept back the cry that struggled for utterance.

"Monsieur would know the name of his benefactor," continued the guard. "Will madame permit me to convey it to monsieur, the American?"

It was a dread crisis in the life of Edith Middleton.

"No!" said she. "Perhaps it is best that he should never know. I shall be glad to hear of his recovery." She looked up at her driver. "To the Park Vendome!" she said, and the old gendarme, hatless, was bowing on the pave, whilst the cab rattled away with agony and beauty in its cramped recesses.

The disowned wife, an hour later, staggered into her own apartment in the Hotel Pictus, and sank into a chair. Her face was white and strangely drawn, and her breath came in little gasps.

"So near!" she suddenly cried. "And I held him in my arms. I pressed my lips to his forehead. Yost! Yost! The gulf seemed narrow between us tonight. And nothing stands between us now but one man and my secret!"

She rose and went to the window. How calm the street looked below, but what a tempest was caged in her bosom!

CHAPTER XI.

THE LETTER.

The man known as Mason Marx leaned against the mantelpiece in his own lodgings and looked into the white face of Edith Middleton. It was the night after his adventure with Barry Stokes in that very room, and Edith had sought him out with the startling story of Lemora's disappearance. Not only this, but she had confided to him her episode with the Apaches, her rescue of her husband from the death grip of these tigers of Paris, and when she paused, he stood long in silence gazing down onto the beautiful face which was full of woe and agony.

"Gone?" he said, at last, echoing the words which she had just uttered. "Lemora gone?"

Edith bowed her head, but said nothing.

"She vanished not of her own will," he went on, after a brief pause. "She has fallen into the hands of some plotter."

"I can well believe that," said Mrs. Middleton. "The man whom she shot at the Hotel Pictus may have come back and wreaked his vengeance upon me by carrying Lemora off, but I don't believe it."

"Then who? Not——"

She caught his words, even before they had formed on his tongue.

"Not Yost! no! no!" she cried. "Some other."

Mason Marx strode from the mantelpiece and crossed the room. He stood at the curtained window for a moment, and then suddenly came back to her with outstretched hands.

"Why keep me longer a stumbling block in your way?" he exclaimed. "Why make me a barrier between you and Yost?"

"I understand," she replied. "I cannot, will not reveal the secret yet. I have set a detective on the trail of this one man, and until I have dealt with him I will steel my heart against all the things I love."

"But Edith——"

"Do not reason with me, Mason," she interrupted. She rose to her feet and stood before him imperious in her beauty, with her dark eyes ablaze. "You know my oath. You know I have sworn to clear this murder mystery which placed you in the felon's dock and almost sent you to your death. The world shall be a desert to my heart till all is made clear. I will not listen!" She executed a remonstrative gesture with her hands.

Mason Marx sprang forward and caught one of her hands as it dropped at her side.

"Your ring?" he cried. "Your wedding ring, Edith?"

She drew back with a shudder of aversion, but he did not let the hand fall.

"You wore it when last we met," he went on.

"Yes, Mason."

"Have you discarded it?"

"It is gone, as you see," she answered, evasively. "It is no longer on my hand."

"I see that it is not."

"Ask me no questions. It belongs to the hunt of my life."

He was silent for a minute.

"Lemora must be found," he suddenly exclaimed. "The girl must be unearthed if it means the raking of Paris from slum to palace."

"That is it! that is it!"

"You are sure she did not fall into the hands of the man whom she faced and shot in the hotel?"

"I believe she did not. I have other foes."

"And your enemies are mine," was the answer. "But for the coming of my friend Jack I might have wrenched some secrets from Barry Stokes. That villain took advantage of the situation and got away. But Paris holds him still."

"I am sure of this."

"If Yost suspects that you rescued him from the Apaches——"

"How can he even suspect?" cried she. "I kept my identity from him. I even refused to give the guard my name. He may be told that a woman came between him and certain death, but why should he think it was I? There are thousands of women in Paris."

"That is true, but what other woman would he suspect?"

Edith did not speak.

"First Lemora," said Mason Marx. "It is like groping in the dark in a city like this. The man, whoever he is, has played his hand well. He came in your absence and plundered the nest."

"For which he deserves death, death!" she cried fiercely.

"I grant you that," he answered. "And if this demon falls into my hands——"

"Deal with him as you will," her voice broke in, "but give me back the sunshine of my life, and I will let you take vengeance upon him."

Mason Marx saw the beautiful woman quit his presence with his kiss upon her brow, and heard her footsteps on the stair beydnd his little room.

Edith returned to her hotel and sat down. Outside the lights of Paris were revealing the broad streets and now and then sounds of its ceaseless bustle came up to her ears. She heard but made no sign.

In the great agony of her soul she sat in the semi-darkness of her room, head bowed and white hands clenched. Why had she not revealed herself to her husband and crossed the gulf between them? A word, a kiss would have done it all. How serious his wounds were she did not know. The Apaches may have struck deeper than she thought; their blades may have opened an avenue to death itself, but she did not think of this. She had saved him for the time, at least, from the devils of Paris, saved him, perhaps, for more agony for her own heart, but the future must disclose this.

Would Girard Legeorge, the detective, find the man she wanted? Would he set her upon his trail, open the path for her to him? Then the whole trial of Masoh Marx came back to her with a vividness that pierced her brain like arrows tipped with the poison of death. She heard the testimony which had almost placed him in the electric chair, she saw the keen eyes which had penetrated her disguise, she lived over again the startling scene between herself and her unforgiving husband, the interview that had broken the bonds of love; she heard once more the sentence of exile because she had refused to reveal the secret which she was keeping, because she had refused to tell him why she had kissed Mason Marx in the garden of the Alhambra.

These thoughts were gall to the disowned wife. In the space of a few moments she lived over those scenes which were branded on her memory as with a red-hot iron.

"Yost! Yost!" she suddenly cried, stretching forth her hands as if her husband stood before her. "Believe me. Believe the woman who loves you still. But I shall keep my secret to the end, no matter what happens. I shall go to my destiny whatever it be. I shall walk the path I have made, even if it leads me through the shadow of death."

A light tap on the door roused her to the present. She crossed the room and threw it open. A boy stood there with a letter in his hand.

"Who gave you this?" cried Edith Middleton, as she took the letter, but looked at the silent boy.

The youth did not reply. He was gone in half a second, and Edith stood like a statue with the letter clutched in her hand.

Something told her that it was an important letter. Had hér husband discovered that she had saved him from the toils of the dread Apaches? She switched on the light and gazed at the envelope. It was addressed to "Edith Middleton," and not to "Mrs. Vorhees," the name under which she had sought to hide her identity.

With eager but quivering hands she broke the seal. A bit of paper dropped out. She uncreased it and stared at the writing thus revealed.

"It is no use, woman," she read with bated breath. "The mills of the eternal gods grind slowly. That pretty ward of yours failed to terminate my existence. When she becomes my wife I shall have completed the vengeance that goads me to my goal.

"BLAKE ABERNATHY."

Edith read the note twice before she looked up. There was not a vestige of color on her face and her deep-set eyes looked out like blazing orbs.

"The villain!" fell from her lips. "The devil incarnate! The very audacity of this unshriven wretch!"

She crushed the paper in her hand and seemed to totter. Her senses seemed to be on the verge of leaving her in darkness. It was a long minute before she recovered. Her gaze fell upon the crumpled letter at her feet, and with her heels she ground it into nothingness.

"When Lemora becomes his wife?" she cried, and her voice rang trumpet-like through the room. "As I live, that hour shall never come! Rather would I take Lemora in my arms and slay her as Appius Claudius slew Virginia in the forum of old Rome. His wife?" The words seemed full of mingled agony and venom, as they leaped from her tongue. "Your wife, Blake Abernathy? I cannot wait till Girard Legeorge finds you. He may be too slow. I shall hunt you for myself."

Five minutes later she stood on the street, the light winds of night fanning her cheeks, and her soul wrapped in the long hunt for vengeance, the hunt which had robbed her of everything dear to woman, a happy home, a husband's adoration, even Heaven itself.

She looked about her. A cab came noiselessly toward the curb. Edith sprang toward it and threw herself upon the cushions inside. The cabman awaited her commands. Clenching her hands, she leaned toward him and gave her order and the vehicle bore her away.

CHAPTER XII.

A TURN OF THE TIDE.

It was some time before Lemora realized the full depths of Barry Stokes's villainy. His declaration that she should not quit her prison until she had become his wife seemed a mere threat, but as the hours passed and the new day came without bringing liberty, the true meaning of his words sank deep into her soul.

She had never liked this man with the crafty eyes. She had despised him when he was her foster-father's valet, for there was something deterrent about him that turned her heart against him. Not only this, but when she learned that he had spied upon Edith to furnish gossip for all New York and turn her husband against her, in her estimation Barry Stokes had no character at all.

Now she had fallen into this villain's power! She did not know in what part of Paris she was. She had taken no note of the route of the cab in which she had been conveyed thither. The house in which she was might be on the outskirts of the city or buried in the maze of streets.

It was some time after she awoke from a troubled sleep that she heard a key turn rustily in a lock. Was Stokes coming back?

Instead of the ex-valet Lemora beheld a little man with frog-like eyes and stooped shoulders. He tiptoed into the semi-darkened chamber, after locking the door, and looked at her. She had risen to an erect attitude and her gaze was a question.

"Is mademoiselle hungry?" simpered the man.

Lemora had not thought of hunger. Her situation, her thoughts had held Nature in abeyance, and the idea of eating had not intruded upon her.

"When I wish to eat I will summon some one," Lemora said, watching the little man whom she rightly supposed was in Barry Stokes's employ.

"But mademoiselle has not touched food since yesterday."

The young girl took a quick stride toward the man.

"Who are you? Who sent you to me?" she demanded, and the man with a fearsome look recoiled from before her.

"I am here to attend to your wants, mademoiselle."

"By the command of your master?"

"I am the concierge," was the reply. "You have but to speak, mademoiselle, to have whatever you crave. Shall it be wine and the best viands from the Cafe Chantante? Ah, what good wines they have there!"

"Silence on that score!" cried Lemora with a rapid gesture. "Open yon door!"

The little man showed his teeth like a wolf of the Pyrenees.

"That would be contrary to monsieur's commands," he laughed.

"I know it. But he has no right to keep me here. I am an American. I came hither against my will. I was duped by a lie!"

There was no response to this. The little wretch drew back and rubbed his hands.

"Since mademoiselle will not eat, she must fast," he exclaimed. "She will hunger by and by."

For the fraction of a second he had his back toward her, and that moment Lemora, with the agile bound of a leopardess, was where he stood. Her hand clutched his shoulder and turned him halfway round. She saw a pallor of fear take possession of his homely face.

"Beware, mademoiselle!" he grated, trying to shake off her grip. "You touch monsieur when you lay hands on Jules Legare."

"So that is your name?" cried Lemora. "Jules Legare! Well, Monsieur Legare, you serve well the fiend who masters you."

He gave a vicious wrench which partially broke her hold.

"The key! the key!" exclaimed Lemora. "Quick! I must have my liberty."

Legare broke away. He retreated to the nearest wall, but found the beautiful girl at him once more.

"Beware!" he shouted in her ears. "You are the bird, I the keeper."

She did not seem to hear him. She scarcely saw the knife which suddenly flashed in her face, a knife clutched by fingers which resembled the talons of an eagle. Old Legare threw up the blade menacingly. He had the wall behind him and fear of bodily harm, if not death itself, was in his eyes.

Lemora did not pause. There was but a door between her and freedom. Beyond that portal was Edith; on the other side of it was life and future happiness; within the room was misery.

She sprang at him with more spirit than one would have thought she possessed. Her hand sweeping upward caught the wrist above which the old man's blade glittered, reasoning perhaps that he would not dare to slay her against the wishes of the man he served.

Without speaking she forced him against the wall. He struggled with all his strength, and he was strong, though he wore an old lion's skin.

"The key! the key!" cried Lemora. "It is the guide to liberty, or your life!"

He could well believe her by her mien. He twisted in her grasp like a captured serpent. If he could hold out against this fair American, perhaps his master might come. Seconds meant much to Jules Legare.

When he found that she was mastering him, he resorted to subterfuge. It is the card the baffled villain always plays.

"Mademoiselle shall have the key," he said. "She must settle with monsieur."

"I shall settle with him," replied Lemora, a double meaning to her words. "The key, Monsieur Legare!"

The knife had fallen from the old man's hand to the floor. It lay at Lemora's feet, and she kicked it away. At any rate it was beyond his reach.

"Now!" said she, releasing him a moment. "The key, wretch."

It took Jules half a second to get his breath. In that brief space of time his old brain worked rapidly. The key was the last thing he intended to surrender. Lemora divined his intentions when he darted toward the door with an oath on his lips.

"You shall not baffle me!" she exclaimed, darting after him.

A pair of strong hands pulled him from the door. The key, which he clutched, was wrenched from his hand, and the next moment the old garcon measured his length on the floor.

Lemora did not wait to triumph over his fall, but forced the iron key into the lock with rising spirits. The door opened and she was free. Quick as thought she turned and locked her jailer in, and then turned toward the stair by which she was confronted.

"You can report to your master when he comes, Monsieur Jules," she laughed, as she went down the steps. "He will reward you as you deserve."

She knew that beyond the house there was widespreading daylight.

All Paris was astir after a night of rest from its wild whirl of revelry. She would find a cab without difficulty. She would be whirled to the Hotel Pictus to gladden the life of Edith whose heart must be torn by her absence.

But what was that sound? The lower door had opened. There was a figure at the foot of the stairs. Ah, if she had only brought the old man's knife with her!

Lemora was midway on the stair when the man below came rushing up. She set her back against the wall and waited.

"You?" cried the man, as he paused on the step below her. "In the name of the saints, who set you free?"

There was no mistaking the voice that spoke thus. The face had long been photographed on the tablets of her brain. Barry Stokes had come back.

After all, her struggle for freedom had failed. There was but half the reach of an arm between them. And within that space lay liberty, love, happiness, or—death!

The continuation of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

When Clara Hurried

WHEN you told Clara McEvilly that you wanted to meet her at 12 o'clock noon what you really meant was that you lived in faint hopes of seeing her at 2 o'clock, hopes which were realized but more often were not. For Clara was chronically and constitutionally late.

With the best intentions in the world Clara never caught up with the clock. She always came gasping in at least an hour after everybody else had arrived. When people asked her to dinner they were reasonably sure she would appear about the time the salad was being served. Once she got to a dinner party just as the soup plates were being removed and they had to resuscitate the hostess with smelling salts, such was the effect of the shock produced by Clara's promptness.

Clara passed three-quarters of her life apologizing and her ingenuity in making excuses was equally only by her childlike faith that people were interested in them. When you are boiling over with rage at a person for being late you are not in a frame of mind to be entertained by the artistic lights and shades of the reason why.

Those who were most vitally and frequently disturbed by this trait of Clara's had figured out that she was late because she never got started on time. If it took an hour to get ready to go Clara invariably allowed herself fifteen minutes. She started to go to California one winter and really arrived there two seasons later because when she began to pack her trunks she found so many clothes to be made over and given away and such numerous trunks to pack and repack that summer caught her twice before she was entirely ready to make the start.

With it all Clara was so deceptively fair to look upon that people invariably forgave her. Henry Jagmark did more than that. He fell in love with her with all the speed of his impetuous nature.

It doubtless was the attraction of opposites, for if ever you wanted Henry you found him impatiently waiting for you ahead of the appointed time.

Clara certainly put him through an awfully ordeal by her placid manner of counting at least forty-five hours in one day. Henry saw a choice collection of last acts at theaters the first few months he was dancing attendance on Clara and nearly went broke hiring taxis when she succeeded in causing them to miss trains to the city.

Being energetic, he started in to reform her because he was strong in his belief in his own powers and ignorant of the ways of womankind.

Clara simply turned her limpid eyes on him after he had talked himself black in the face about her besetting sin and murmured surprisedly, "Why, Henry! You speak exactly as though you thought I never was on time! Maybe I am late a few minutes once in a while, but——"

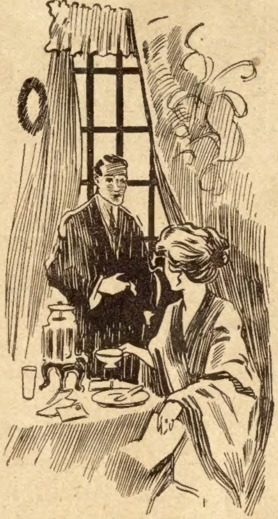
It began then to dawn on Henry that the case was more serious than he had supposed. Perhaps nobody ever put in more real good hard work with less results than did Henry Jagmark. Scoldings, entreaties, cajolery alike had no effect. If he lost his temper Clara wept and if he tried to encourage her by voicing his admiration she beamed—but she kept on being late.

"Clara," Henry told her once shaking his head sorrowfully, "if there was anything on earth that could make you hurry and for once in your life be on time I'd do it or get it for you if such a thing was possible. Do you know of anything?"

"Oh, yes," declared Clara sweetly. "That is, I'll think it over and let you know."

Then one morning at 10 o'clock, when Clara in a negligee and with her hair just twisted up anyhow was having her morning coffee, Henry walked in upon her, brushing aside the maid who insisted that Clara was not receiving callers at that moment. Henry had a crease between his eyebrows and a watch in his hand.

"I've just had notice," he told Clara, "that I've got to go to Panama for the rest of the winter on business. I take a train at 1 o'clock today. I am now going downtown to get a marriage license and shall expect to meet you and your mother at half past eleven at my office, where I'll have a clergyman and all the rest of the paraphernalia. I'm sorry we can't carry out our plans for a fussy wedding such as you wanted, but this Panama business makes it impossible. Your trunk can follow on tomorrow's train, but I'd pack it now if I were you while you are filling the suitcases. I've got to rush and you'd better do the same!"



"Got to go to Panama."

Then, after dropping a hasty kiss upon Clara's pallid brow, Henry departed.

Clara started to have hysterics, thought better of it and shrieked for her mother, who was a person of much presence of mind, meanwhile taking out hairpins as she went upstairs two steps at a time.

As Clara and Henry pulled away from Chicago that day on the 1 o'clock train Henry smiled at her contentedly. Barring the fact that she was still breathing fast Clara looked the same as usual.

"Anyhow," Henry told her, "I found something at last that could make you hurry—but what I'm puzzled about now is what I'm going to invent to achieve that great result all the rest of our lives!"

A Patriotic Toast.

At a Fourth of July dinner in Shanghai, the English consul toasted the British flag. He said:

"Here is to the Union Jack, the flag of flags, the flag that has floated in every land on every sea for a thousand years, the flag on which the sun never sets."

It was strong sentiment, and the Americans were a little overawed, until Eli Perkins was called to toast the Stars and Stripes.

Looking into the proud faces of the Englishmen, he said:

"Here is to the Stars and Stripes of the new republic. When the setting sun lights up her stars in Alaska, the rising sun salutes her on the rockbound coast of Maine. It is the flag of liberty, never lowered to any foe, and the only flag that whipped the flag on which the sun never sets."

A Particular King.

King George is particular regarding the training of his sons. Two of the younger boys not long ago were riding near his majesty when the cavalcade passed men who were working on the road. The men removed their hats and the King at once doffed his own hat. His majesty noticed that the boys in the enthusiasm of their gallop had not followed his example. He immediately called a halt, took the princes back to the workmen and ordered them to remove their hats.

The Detective Barrier;

Or, HOW AND WHY

By WM. H. MANNING

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CHAPTER XIX.

WITHOUT A REVOLVER.

IT WAS nearly an hour later that Netley, who had been out on an investigating tour, returned to the hotel. Near the entrance he met Jasper Logan, who looked like one in mental distress, and when Netley called to him he passed on with the air of one who had heard nothing.

"Something nibbling at Jasper's mind," soliloquized the detective. "Wonder why he has been in the hotel?"

Continuing his way Netley was soon with his superior.

"Well?" questioned Barford, with some eagerness.

"Gallantry demands that I give something else precedence over my report," Netley returned. "As I was passing Docia's house, Annabel appeared at the window and flung a letter down at me with super-feminine accuracy. It fell at my very feet. Here it is."

Barford opened the letter. It was brief, and, though in Annabel's writing, lacked address and signature.

"Item one: Careful attention to the hair of Mary Ray, servant of my good and flawless friend, Docia, satisfied me that Mary's hair is of precisely the same shade as the lock that was in Harden Kendall's dead hand. Wondering if Mary had lost a lock, I very sweetly offered to combs and dress her hair in the latest style. Perhaps it was only that she was averse to new ways, but I scared that red-haired servant almost out of her wits. She grew as agitated as a witch, and as soon as possible got away from my harrowing presence. I wonder why? I wish I knew whether her scalp is neat, whole, unwounded, or——

"Item two: This morning Docia sat a long while reading an article in the newspaper. She was so intent that I grew curious, and finally broke in upon her, claimed to feel an acute interest in her flowers, developed a flood of words, and ended by being invited to go into the conservatory with her. I managed to get back ahead of her and easily identified the article. It was an account of the winter's logging operations in the Gashside Hills, with mention of the great work of the lumberjacks, and so on. Near the end was a statement that the region had been so isolated by nature that it was not until a bridge had been built over a great chasm that workers could penetrate its fastness, or, more properly, could get logs out.

"Then there was mention of those who built the bridge, all particulars, in fact; and Docia's father, Martin Lettington, was named as the contractor. Perhaps that was why she read, but he was only mentioned in one line, near the end, and it must have been the display heading, which told of logging in the Gashside Hills, that attracted her. Why is she interested in wood-choppers? By the way, she never harmed any human being."

Barford passed the letter over to Netley.

"Annabel is as neat as ever," the assistant remarked as he finished.

"Meaning what?"

"She wanted to act, as hairdresser," replied Netley dryly. "I saw that Mary Ray close at hand yesterday. A woman as mild as she would make a fine victim, but never a guilty person."

"She is not to blame for the color of her hair. Also, do you remember that out aid afield reports that the shackfolks may be headed for the Gashside Hills?"

"All falls into line well, but why—why?"

"Netley, you did most of the investigating as to Docia's family. Be so good as to report what relatives she has."

"None, except her aunt, Mrs. Forrest. Her father was an only child."

"How many times was her father married?"

"Only once."

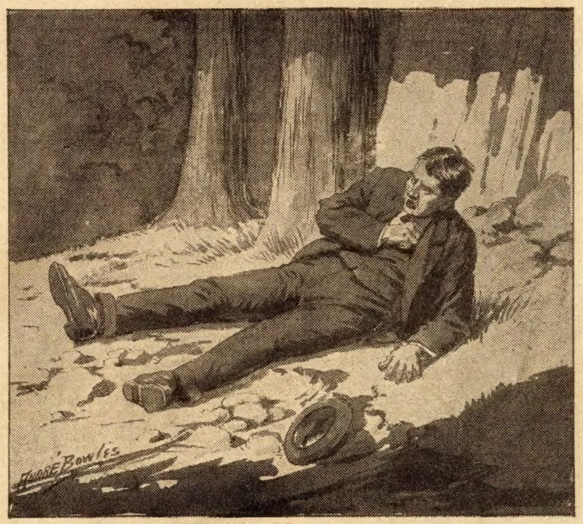
"Wrong, Netley! He married a second time, and his matrimonial certificate was burned in the woods by that little fire."

"How the dickens do you know that?"

"I don't know it. It's a guess, but I have great faith in it. You remember that burned fragment of stout paper with 'L-e-t,' Let, upon it. I have considered all sorts of documents, public and otherwise, calculated to make such a fragment—very strong paper, Netley—and can only do as I've always done, fall back on a marriage certificate."

"But may it not have been Docia's own——"

"I am satisfied that she is single, and that Roland Varrick is just as bad off. I can't see a widow in Docia, so I assume she did not marry Kendall. She has been mentally upset, terribly upset, by somebody's certificate she can't find—she wants to locate 'it'—keep that in mind, Netley, 'it.' "



He fell to the ground.

"I pass," remarked the assistant helplessly.

"Query: Who has married that she is deeply interested in? Not herself, not Mrs. Forrest, not Varrick—unless I guess wrong. Nobody is left but her father. Now, take heed to the fact that Martin Lettington was contractor for the bridge at Gashside Hills, and that, the shack-couple having failed in some errand here, they are headed for those same hills, presumably homeward bound."

"But Martin Lettington is dead."

"Perhaps his widow lives."

"Maybe, but all this doesn't tell who killed Harden Kendall."

Barford knit his brows in a perplexed frown.

"Right, it does not!" he agreed.

"And it seems to make the mystery the deeper."

"It does!" Barford admitted.

"That reminds me, there is talk afoot that Thomson has applied for a warrant to arrest Jasper Logan, and I saw Jasper leaving this hotel as I came in, and he was plunged in melancholy."

"I suspect that Thomson is trying an experiment," said Barford, smiling. "If he had applied for a warrant he would not have told anybody here, or, if he told, he would make sure tidings did not get to Jasper. Looks to me like a deliberate device to scare the trader into a false move."

"Will it work?"

"Not is Jasper takes my advice."

"I follow you," remarked Netley, nodding. "I believe you are right."

With this enigmatical remark he took a chair and proceeded to ask further questions on the points already mentioned. After a while Barford ended by falling into deep thought. At the end of ten minutes he rose and left the room and the hotel. Outside he met Constable Carter and asked a question he had asked of Doctor Brown early in the investigation.

"What was the weather the night Kendall was killed?"

"Oh! I should call it moderate," Carter responded slowly. "I remember that the stars were out, but think it was a trifle overcast—just a bit."

"Any thunder and lightning?"

"Bless you, no. Too cold for that."

"Sure?"

"Absolutely sure."

Barford resumed his way. A few minutes later he entered the house of Mr. Pottson. This was the man who told of thunder and lightning on the evening in question.

All that day Barford was sharply attentive to the several mails that arrived, but he received no early letter. Also, he several times passed the telegraph office and eyed it keenly, but no message arrived for him. It was not his way to betray nervousness nor to feel it especially, yet it was a period of trying suspense. Various ventures called for his attention, but, first of all, he wanted to hear from the district attorney's office, with information as to Mrs. Forrest's mission.

Thomson was even more active, and seemed to be a man of pressing affairs, but he had an expression puzzled rather than expectant. In one particular the rivals in detective work were one—Thomson was deeply interested in mails and telegrams, and the jingle of a telephone bell added many per cent to his alertness. He, too, was disappointed. News was lacking, and the suspense was perhaps trying.

It was the five o'clock mail that brought Barford's waiting to an end. His letter came, written by the district attorney in person, and it was read with keen interest.

"We have to report that, in the morning, Mrs. Forrest went to Stelling & Ackerley's private detective office, shadowed by our own man, Gray. At the end of the interview she returned to her stopping place, and one of Stelling's men took the train north. Gray followed, and was led to the town of Oaklot, an hour's ride.

"There the private detective went to the office of one Pratt, a local notary. Gray managed to listen outside the window, and though he missed a good deal, it seems that Pratt is a shady customer, he being practically accused of forgery by the caller.

"The point at issue, it seems, was whether one Martin Lettington was legally married to a woman referred to as a wood-chopper's sister. Stelling's man wanted to prove that the marriage was a sham, or that none had taken place. In fact, he claimed that Pratt had forged a certificate of such marriage. The manner of the questioner showed that the wish was father to the thought, for he was uncertain. Pratt denied even knowing the various persons or of them, and he was not to be shaken or entrapped.

"The private detective remains in town and plainly intends to wage an active war. For my own part, after having word from Gray, I wired him to make sure Pratt did not take to flight. Is the matter important enough to warrant our watching him constantly?"

Within ten minutes after finishing his reading Barford had sent a telegram flashing to the district attorney.

"Watch! Imperative that Pratt should not escape."

During the hours that followed Barford and Netley were almost constantly busy, and they were thrown upon their own resources until late in the afternoon when a man came with a note. Barford opened it.

"From Annabel," he remarked.

Quickly taking in the communication, he tossed it to his assistant. This is what Annabel had written:

"Levi has seen me with Docia, and the simpleton told in his childish way that I had once sent a note by him to you. Docia realized immediately that I was your aid, and I confessed. I need you here. Come at once!"

Netley looked up from the note very slowly.

"Shall you go?" he asked.

"Certainly! Annabel says she needs me."

"I reckon they have got her prisoner. Why didn't we question the messenger as to how he received the note? Tossed out of the window, very likely. If Docia has got a few desperadoes in the house there is liable to be a hot time ahead for you, and you had better— Say, wait a bit!"

But Barford, under way, only quickened his pace and Netley was left to himself. He did not like it, and presently began a search of his leader's room. When he found a revolver in a coat not then in use, he growled like a sore-headed bear.

"Gone unarmed! Reckless fellow! He will be helpless as a baby."

Loyal Netley was despondent, and the period of waiting that followed did nothing to cheer him. Two hours passed, and still Barford was absent. Netley saw night fall, and then he ventured to break a rule he had felt applied to the situation and ventured near the Lettington house. Getting as close as was prudent, he eyed it critically.

The grounds were wholly dark, and the house but little better. One front window showed a pallid flicker of light, probably because it was the end of an upper hall. Signs of human life were absolutely lacking, and Netley's uneasiness increased. What was occurring in the house of mysteries?

Once he went to the rear, where he saw lighted rooms with drawn shades, but search for the ladder failed to bring it to view. Helpless, and not daring to risk upsetting Barford's designs, by ringing, he still waited. Time passed draggingly, and Netley lingered, but Barford did not appear.

"And," mentally lamented the assistant, "he went there without a revolver."

CHAPTER XX.

THE PAST.

Late in the following day the district attorney was told that a caller wished to see him. When the name was given he paid prompt attention, and presently he was shaking Barford's hand.

"All over?" asked the man of law, animatedly.

"All but gathering in the loose ends," the detective replied easily.

"Well, who killed Harden Kendall?"

"Not so fast," Barford said, smiling. "Let me tell it in my own way."

He did tell it so, with the smoke of two cigars billowing between the district attorney and himself.

"I'll take up the persons I have mentioned in my reports as open to suspicion. First, Rich, the cabman. It has been claimed that he owed Kendall money he could not pay, but he has produced a receipt that can't be challenged. He bungled matters by stating that he brought the lumberman home in the middle of the afternoon, whereas, it was some days previous to that that Kendall came at that hour. Rich knows how whisky tastes, and is now satisfied that the beverage muddles the brain. Exit Rich!"

"Next!" encouraged the district attorney.

"Next, the Beldens. Martha, long housekeeper for Kendall, wanted to marry him, but he was not willing. When certain it was no use to hope for that, Martha happened to learn of a business irregularity on his part, that, if made public, would place him in danger of the law. She used her knowledge to demand that he make a will giving her a fat sum. He made it, but was prudent enough to sign a second will, some days later, and Martha didn't get a cent.

"Unluckily for him, Martha had an agent watching him, and she soon learned of the second will, though not of its terms. After due thought she openly took him to task, showing deep hostility, but he defied her. Why? And how dared he? Well, I am positive we shall find that he had borrowed enough money from somebody to cover up and wipe out his business crookedness. That may be taken as fact.

"Free from fear, he took as high a hand as Martha did, and they quarreled good and plenty. Dorcas Belden was in the game, and she went so far as to strike Kendall in the face. So much for the relations between them on the last evening of his life.

"That evening, though they formerly said they were not out of the doors, Martha, Dorcas and Jasper Logan left the house and started to find the lumberman. Jasper carried a revolver. They did come upon him, and Jasper began a quarrel with him, but Kendall slipped away through private premises and escaped them in a few minutes. Later in the evening, Jasper went to a farmhouse to see about a heifer, and, on his way back, chanced upon Kendall's body.

"That is the history of the Belden-Logan connection with the lumberman's death. I wormed this out of Jasper, in part, when I had him in my room at the hotel, and the rest has been told me by Martha. The law has no claim upon the three for what they have done, but we shall never know what they intended to do.

"Martha was a shrewd woman, and she would easily see that a will signed under the stress of fear would not be allowed to stand. Surely she knew that Kendall would make a second will. Then of what use was the one in her favor? Frankly, I believe that they intended to make way with Kendall as soon as they could do so with reasonable safety, following the first will. He signed the second one too soon for action. Also, I believe that, having lost their tempers and their heads, the three intended—merely for revenge—to put him out of the way that last evening, and Martha doubtless had matters arranged to show a motive, but Kendall left them so suddenly, and got into the cover of the building so unexpectedly, that they were baffled.

"Yes, I think they twice planned to murder him, but we can't trouble them for what they only meditated, especially as we can prove nothing. They surely did not kill him."

"Exit the Belden-Logan combination," said the district attorney slowly. "Have another cigar, Barford. They are rather good. Go on!"

"Next," proceeded the detective, "about Docia Lettington——"

"Now you interest me! Yes, yes!"

"Docia," Barford explained, "was leading a quiet life, engaged to Roland Varrick and expecting happiness without a check, when Kendall called at her house a fortnight or so before the fatal evening. In his lumber operations he traveled widely, and he had discovered that a woman was soon to appear and claim that she was second wife to Docia's father, the late Martin Lettington. She was to produce a marriage certificate, but the marriage was alleged to have been performed by one Pratt, a notary in the town of Oaklot, and he was such a dubious character that Kendall had the impression that the whole matter was a blackmailing scheme.

"Terribly frightened, not so much because of the money she might lose as by the dread of family disgrace, Docia called a council of friends, at which were present besides herself, Mrs. Forrest, Doctor Brown, Roland Varrick and Peter Caine, all staunch friends. As Kendall had given names and locality, Brown went north to the edge of the Gashside Hills to see the persons so dreaded. Let me explain who they were.

"When Martin Lettington was engaged as contractor for the great bridge near the Hills he met a young woman who fascinated him briefly. She was Meglind Bracken, sister of a wood-chopper named Peter Bracken, and of a family nearly ignorant as animals, but she was really handsome in a bold, rosy-cheeked way, and gay and brilliant after her style, while she could talk well, and had ninety per cent more brains than her kindred.

"Doctor Brown was uncertain as to what his evidence indicated, for, as the Brackens had disappeared some time before—there were three of them, Peter, Meglind and another sister, Hanlish—he could only interview others. When Brown returned the problem was: Had Martin come to his senses and thrown Meglind over in good time, or had he been so mad as to marry her?

"It was certain that a marriage certificate was in existence, but was it genuine, or had Pratt forged it? Even the little money of the Brackens might buy him, or promise of a share of the plunder.

"Harden Kendall may have had faults, but he was a good-hearted man and he retained his interest in the matter. He had a man of his scouting about to find the Brackens, and to learn just when they were likely to reach Grandon, and because of this he often had speech with Docia, to discuss the case. Often, this was on the street, which led Martha Belden into jealous anger, but I'll pass that by.

"Varrick formed a scheme for meeting the Brackens, which did his judgment no great credit. Bracken had once been a lumberjack in the Grandon region, and Varrick reasoned that he would, first of all, go to the old shacks near the village, and so the young man planned to meet them there and take the certificate away from them violently, thus drawing their fangs at the start. In order to have an alibi he was to pretend to be sick in bed with typhoid fever. Brown, of course, would be his doctor.

"Kendall, continuing his friendly aid, learned that Meglind had died suddenly, but that her brother and sister were coming to use the certificate for blackmailing purposes. He was able to say when the pair, who were tramping the entire distance, would probably reach Grandon, but he underrated their speed by a day, as it proved.

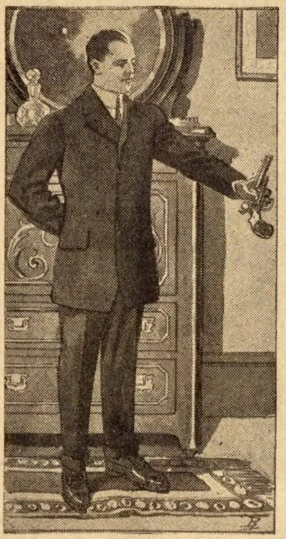
"On the fatal evening Varrick was resting in his room under the belief that he had twenty-four hours more before the time of action, when Doctor Brown came hastily to him with tidings that Kendall had seen the Brackens near the north shack.

"Dismayed and startled into swift action Varrick ran out and made his way to the woods. As he neared the shack he pulled off his shoes and crept up in his stocking feet. The shanty was empty, but he mistakenly thought he heard voices to the west, so he clapped on his shoes and ran in the light that was made poor by trees here and there. He was going at a round clip when he tumbled from the cliff, struck in a treetop, fell to the ground, and not only had a severe fall but sprained his ankle.

"This did not prevent his being limpingly active for the greater part of two hours, but what he did was so barren of results that he may be dropped. Wait a bit!—in the fall he lost his watch, but it was found, minus the bar and a couple of links, by Docia, the next day.

"Now, you have seen that Varrick missed his game, and I'll add that the Brackens did not call at the Lettington house, yet they promptly started away from Grandon and, maybe, are still making long tracks for the Gashside Hills. Query: Why did they so unexpectedly abandon their scheme? That is interesting.

"Docia has a servant, a middle-aged woman named Mary Ray, a plain, practical, loyal soul, who is none too brilliant and surely eccentric, but very devoted to her young mistress. Nobody took Mary into confidence, but Mary has ears and the habit of using them. By listening she learned what plot was afoot against Docia, though nothing of the counterplot to baffle it.



"Gone unarmed!"

"Mary did some thinking on her own hook and acted upon it.

"When she knew the Brackens were almost at hand, she equipped herself for business. Knowing that soft steps are essential to some things besides getting into position to listen at doors, she took off her shoes and put on a pair of slumber-slippers of coarse felt. I have seen them, and—of course, they have no soles—they are utterly shapeless things. Also, she provided herself with matches, for she had a clear plan.

"She went to the shack and found Peter and Hanlish Bracken there. The hut was dark, but Mary could see their figures. They were standing and talking, she heard mention of the certificate, whereupon Bracken removed it from his pocket. Instantly Mary darted inside, seized the paper, and fled.

"Presently she heard them in pursuit, and knew they might overtake her, so she set her prearranged plan in motion. Kicking together a quantity of dry leaves and twigs she laid the certificate upon them and lit a match and fired the heap.

"It burned quickly, but it guided the Brackens, and they came straight for her, at last. The fire guided them, you see. Mary was frightened, and she snatched up a small part of the paper that was not consumed, partly kicked out the blaze, and fled, hotly pursued. Through the woods she went, across a turf field and then across a plowed strip—her felt-shod footprints there afterward puzzled me greatly—and on into the village. There she was overtaken.

"Bracken clutched at her red hair, and with such viciousness that he pulled out a strand. It might have gone hard with her but for one thing.

"Kendall had never abandoned his interest, and he had been active for Docia in various ways. Once he asked leave to meet the Brackens before they reached town and have them arrested, but Docia's one great idea was to avoid family disgrace—she could not endure having the world know of her father's infatuation for the ignorant wood-chopper's sister. So she refused Kendall's offer, but so kindly that his interest was not lessened.

"It happened that Kendall was near when Mary Ray was assaulted, and he at once attacked Bracken. Having considerable knowledge of science, he was far more than a match for the lumberjack, and though he received one blow in the stomach that hurt for a while, he whipped both Bracken and Hanlish so thoroughly that they took to their heels.

"Not until they were gone did he know that Mary had been despoiled of a lock of her hair. Seeing it in her hand, after she picked it up, he grew angry again. He did not want the women of Grandon used that way. Resolved to thrash Bracken still further, thereby avenging Mary's hurt and his own aching stomach, he planned for revenge.

"In the tumult of the moment the Brackens had taken the south road, but he argued to Mary that they would soon head north, and the fact that the road curves around a low hill like the letter U led him to think they would follow it, and that he could cut them off on the west side. Still holding the lock of hair he started across the field.

"Mary, left alone, went home, and she never mentioned her absence nor her experience to any one. I have before stated that she was eccentric. Her silence, however, left Docia and her friends greatly perplexed. Who had killed Kendall? They believed it was the Brackens, for Kendall had been uttering threats against them, but there was no proof known to them. Next, where were the Brackens, and where was the marriage certificate? Docia, still dreading family disgrace and eager to hide everything, was, nevertheless, painfully anxious to find the paper and destroy it. But how could she do it? Where was it?

"She made one interesting move to learn, coming to my hotel with Peter Caine and ransacking my room there—but that is immaterial.

"The one person who could have prevented the perplexities and misunderstandings that followed was Mary Ray, but she combed her hair so as to conceal the loss of a lock and said nothing. Hidden away under something in the attic she retained the fragment of the marriage certificate she had failed to burn, and there was enough of it to prove all claims. I have seen it. It was what was left of Martin Lettington's alleged certificate, but I think the latter will prove to have been a forgery.

"As you know, I had Annabel along with me. She had got friendly with Docia, but the latter learned that she was my assistant. She accused Annabel, the latter met her amiably and diplomatically, and after a long talk Docia was convinced that her best way was to take me into her confidence. Annabel, strongly believing in Miss Lettington's innocence, summoned me in haste.

"I went there, was there several hours, and heard everything, and so am able to tell you all."

The district attorney nodded thoughtfully.

"But," he replied, "I sent you to Grandon on a definite errand, and I don't find a word in all this to tell who killed Harden Kendall!"

CHAPTER XXI.

WHY AND HOW.

Barford smiled as if in strong satisfaction.

"Right!" he agreed. "There is not a word in it to tell who killed Kendall. That is just what I've been thinking all along. Getting to work, it soon seemed to me that I had track of two dramas of human emotion, perhaps of crime, and that they were slightly intermingled—only slightly—but I have been vastly perplexed."

"I'm still so," declared the district attorney. "Give me light."

"I have learned the truth," said Barford, quietly. "Having learned it, I make this offer. I will give ten thousand dollars to the individual who will correctly answer this double question: How was Kendall killed, and why was he killed? To those who think they can guess I say, try it!"

The public prosecutor spread out his hands.

"Don't ask me!" he exclaimed. "Tell me."

"From the beginning," resumed the detective, slowly, "there were odd facts. Kendall was shot in the back, and the general belief was that the missile was from a rifle, but no shot was heard, not even by a man who was watching with a sick child, a minute's walk distant. Absolutely no footprints were to be found of the man who did the shooting, though the ground rather favored their appearing, if ever made. Also, it was good shooting when a man could drop Kendall in the night with a semi-overcast sky to cause gloom. How was I to account for these things? If there was a way, I failed to find it.

"Mr. Pottson, a late witness in the game, a man who had been briefly out of town, gave me my first clew. Talking with me he said something incidentally about a flash of lightning and a sizzle of thunder he had seen and heard on the fatal evening. His other remarks were so important that I passed that by then, only wondering a bit.

"Later I got my mind trained on the subject. Coupled with what I've just told, he spoke of the evening being so cold that he covered young plants in his garden to head off possible frost. It struck me that frost rarely accompanied thunder and lightning. Also, though I've heard thunder boom, roll and crack, I never heard it 'sizzle.' Feeling that I had happened on something odd, I asked the local constable about thunder and lightning on that evening, and he declared there had been none, and that weather conditions made such things impossible.

"I went again to Pottson and questioned him in detail. He affirmed that he had seen a very brief but very vivid yellow flash west of the village, and that it was accompanied by a sound he could describe in no word save 'sizzle.' Understanding that the flash must have been hard by where Kendall fell, and about the same time, I held on to Mr. Pottson tightly. Results followed, by putting one and one together.

"When I entered the case I was told that the shacks, after being deserted by the lumbermen, had briefly been occupied by certain poor persons who wished to avoid paying rent elsewhere, and a queer old book canvasser, a clockmender, a bug-hunting scientist, and a sick man in search of health were specifically mentioned.

"At that time I saw nothing in this, especially as the two last named had died in town and been buried there, but when Pottson was trying to describe the so-called flash of lightning and the sizzle of thunder, he admitted that both were odd, and, to illustrate to me, added that they were like Professor Waddell's fireworks. Being asked to explain who the professor was, he told me. It was the bug-hunting naturalist again.

"Waddell must have been a man of ability, and of varied accomplishments. Interest in bugs was only a part of his scientific acquirements. He was also a geologist and—you will see he was not really poor like other dwellers in the shacks—he was ambitious to improve pyrotechnics both as to quality and cheapness. He labored over original composition, and, having means of discharging his experiments, often made the evening skies brilliant with fireworks. It was his aim to bring Fourth of July observances in fine style within the reach even of the poor.

"But the professor died and was buried in Grandon. An idea that was slowly taking form in my mind was rebuffed by that fact until Pottson added something more.

"'Not a relative was at his funeral,' Pottson said, slowly, 'and as our folks had small sympathy with his pursuits, I reckon Levi was the only real mourner Waddell had.'

"'Levi?'" I questioned.

"'Our weak-minded village boy,' Pottson explained. 'He formerly spent half his time with the professor and did little tasks for him—yes, and I well remember Levi's delight over the fireworks. More childish than a lad of ten years, he was almost crazy over the brilliant things that shot skyward. Fireworks, to him, were raptures in delightful colors.'

"Mr. District Attorney, I had my clew!" added Barford, calmly.

The public prosecutor hitched forward in his chair.

"Well?" he questioned, almost breathlessly.

"Well, I questioned Pottson yet further, and then, when through at Docia's, hunted Levi up. When I asked him bluntly but kindly if the professor had left any part of his treasures that had not been removed at his death, the lad looked me squarely, mildly in the eye, and, smiling his weak, gentle smile, unhesitatingly said yes, in the hole in the cliff where Waddell kept them. At my request he unhesitatingly led me there.

"Concealed by piled-up rocks and bushes the recess was there, and within it were two engines—guns, if you prefer—for firing the pyrotechnics, as well as several other things that proved to be half-completed rockets and other fireworks.

DOCTOR'S SHIFT

Now Gets Along Without It.

A physician says: "Until last fall I used to eat meat for my breakfast and suffered with indigestion until the meat had passed from the stomach.

"Last fall I began the use of Grape-Nuts for breakfast and very soon found I could do without meat, for my body got all the nourishment necessary from the Grape-Nuts and since then I have not had any indigestion and am feeling better and have increased in weight.

"Since finding the benefit I derived from Grape-Nuts I have prescribed the food for all my patients suffering from indigestion or over-feeding and also for those recovering from disease where I want a food easy to take and certain to digest and which will not overtax the stomach.

"I always find the results I look for when I prescribe Grape-Nuts. For ethical reasons please omit my name." Name given by mail by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

The reason for the wonderful amount of nutriment, and the easy digestion of Grape-Nuts is not hard to find.

In the first place, the starchy part of the wheat and barley goes through various processes of cooking, to perfectly change the starch into dextrose or grape-sugar, in which state it is ready to be easily absorbed by the blood.

The parts in the wheat and barley which Nature can make use of for rebuilding brain and nerve centres are retained in this remarkable food, and thus the human body is supplied with the powerful strength producers, so easily noticed after one has eaten Grape-Nuts each day for a week or 10 days.

"There's a reason," and it is explained in the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

"I asked Levi if he ever discharged any himself, since the professor died. He had, though, loving them, he had used them sparingly, and only at long intervals. Asked if he had done this lately, he said he had fired one a few evenings before.

"'But,' he added, plaintively, 'they no longer have pretty colors, only a bright flash, and as I don't know how to make the guns point up in the air, I can only fire them along near the ground.'

"There," continued Barford, "you have it all. The lad going there barefoot, had discharged some sort of fireworks, and the thing had gone through Harden Kendall and killed him instantly. Poor Levi did not see him before or after he fell.

"It was not easy to fix upon the evening with certainty, but it was finally done. The lack of bright colors was due to the fact that the things were not ready for use—not fully loaded, as I may say—though the cylinder that gave them weight and the explosive powder were there. Levi was equipped with a deadly weapon, and, not knowing the mechanism that elevated the muzzle of the gun skyward, he had sent the weight horizontally on its fatal errand, in childish innocence.

"When I left him I found Netley again, and together we searched a third time for the missing missile. Far away, well across the road, we located it in a tree. We have it, little changed from its original shape, and it is like others in the undischarged fireworks.

"There is no criminal in this case, only a simple-minded boy, who is too innocent to be blamed. Kendall was victim of accident."

Half an hour later Barford added:

"In a way I am sorry to see Thomson fail. He has done well, all things considered, and he felt that the shack-people were valuable game. By the way, when they came to the town, Bracken bore his ax upon his shoulder. He had concealed it, but Thomson found it, carried it to his hotel under his coat, and perhaps has it now.

"Thomson and I were equally puzzled by a visit of Martha Belden to the shack, but it seems that she overheard some of Kendall's talk with Docia, and went to the hut merely through idle curiosity.

"Now, Mr. District Attorney, there is no murderer to punish in this case, and Docia is eager to have her case—an outside affair—hushed up. I hope the Brackens may be left to their defeated loneliness. We don't want anything of them."

"They never reached the point of doing much harm," the prosecutor admitted thoughtfully.

"And Notary Pratt——"

"Shall be punished if he forged that marriage certificate."

But Pratt never was brought to task, though forgery was theoretically established. Martin Lettington had never married Meglind. Still, the burning of the certificate destroyed all legal hold upon the notary, and Docia, married to Varrick, found no public shadow on the family name.

The End.

* * *

Naughty Royal Children.

The strange antics of royal children often drive their tutors and other attendants to distraction. As a rule, their parents do all in their power to rear their little ones with a democratic regard for others, but with courtiers and servants on every hand ready to pet and spoil the little princes and princesses, the task is well-nigh hopeless.

King George of England had a great record as a sort of exalted Tom Sawyer when he was a youngster. On one occasion when a corps of painters were decorating one of his father's residences the little fellow waited until they were absent at lunch, and then mixed their paints into new and wonderful color combinations.

At one time in his childhood the late King Edward's mischief so angered Queen Victoria that she gave him a good, old-fashioned spanking in the presence of the ladies of the court.

When Manuel, deposed King of Portugal, was young, he was credited with having a wonderfully sweet disposition, but his idea of his own importance was so pronounced that his mother feared he would develop into an overbearing and conceited man. At one time, to give him a lesson in humility, she made him give up his seat to his tutor. The boy complied, but said: "I am delighted to surrender to you, sir, the place which rightly belongs to me."

The present Czarovitch of Russia strutted in front of the saluting sentries with such an air of hauteur that his father decided to teach him that his soldiers were not mere animals, and ordered them not to salute him in future until he altered his attitude. The heir to the throne was filled with shame when he walked by the soldiers again and found that they took no notice of him. Later the Czar found him pleading pitifully with one of the men to salute him "just once," and promising not to tell his father.

* * *

An Expert Shopper.

Early one morning a thin, well-dressed woman walked rapidly into an Atchison dry goods store where a big sale was going on. She stopped at the first counter she came to and began ransacking it. The woman at the counter fell back and a clerk hurried forward and respectfully looked on. The woman's hands handled the goods on that counter with the practiced skill of a surgeon when he is performing an operation; she did not miss one piece of goods, and then with a hard glitter in her eyes and setting her thin lips more closely together she darted to another counter, plunged head first into the material piled two or three feet high. The other women at the counter looked at her deferentially, and the clerks gazed fascinated. From counter to counter the woman went, without glancing to the right or to the left. She examined every yard of goods, every ready-to-wear garment, every piece of embroidery, lace, etc.

Then, with the swiftness of an arrow, she shot into the basement of the store, and from a damaged egg beater to bolts of cloth her hands flew over everything in that basement. Everywhere the woman encountered awestricken glances from the other women and clerks. At last the town clock began striking six. Clerks removed their aprons and covers were placed over the goods preparatory to closing the store for the night, and that small, thin woman, with a triumphant gleam in her eyes and a grim smile on her lips, carrying a bundle about as large as a walnut, walked out of the store, and every clerk there and every woman knew they had seen a magnificent "shopper" in full operation.

* * *

George Explains.

"George, dear, just one more question and I promise not to bother you any more, during the game," she pleaded.

"Well, what is it now?" said George, impatiently.

"Tell me why the catcher wears that funny wire thing on his face?"

"Oh, sometimes the catcher gets mad at the umpire's decisions."

"What has that to do with it?"

"Some day he might get too mad and bite the umpire, and as they don't want that to happen they muzzle him."

* * *

Only One Man Worried.

The doctor had just concluded his daily examination and the gouty old gentleman felt none too pleased.

"Well," he asked, in the manner of one who demands an ultimatum, "how do you find me today, eh? Better or worse?"

"Oh, better; much better," said the medico, and rubbed his hands. "You're improving rapidly. The only thing that's wrong now is the fact that your legs still remain swollen. But that doesn't worry me in the least."

The irascible old invalid drew in a quick, sharp breath.

"No, of course it doesn't," he blurted out. "And if your legs were swollen it wouldn't worry me!"

* * *

Could Not Cry.

This is a really, truly Irish story which was told at Tammany Hall the other day:

When an Irish county court was about to open its session recently the discovery was made that the court crier was absent. A substitute was provided and the Court had hardly taken up a case when a breathless messenger boy dashed in with a telegram from the absent officer. The missive was handed to the Judge, who read:

"Wife's mother died last night. Will not be able to cry today."

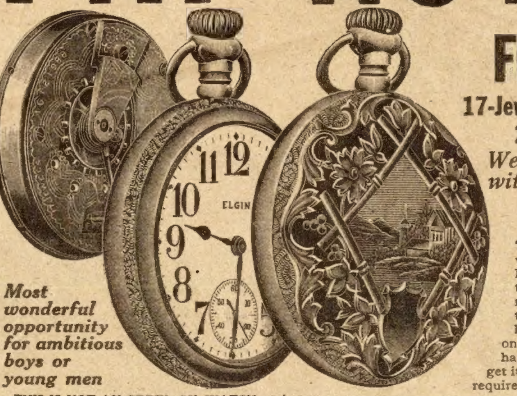
PAY NOTHING

FOR THIS WATCH

17-Jeweled, 18-Size, Elgin Movement in a 20-Year Gold-Filled Wadsworth Case

We set you up in business for yourself without your having to invest a penny

Marvelous Offer to You



Most wonderful opportunity for ambitious boys or young men

This valuable watch is one of the greatest values we have ever seen. We are proud of it and we know you will be when you get it. It is a watch that commands admiration from everybody. It is so much better, so much finer, so much handsomer, than most watches of its kind for which you would have to pay a jeweler $20.00 or $30.00 so that it will at once interest all who examine it. You may just as well have this watch as not. It does not take very long to get it on our plan, and when you have done the little we require the watch remains in return for your trouble.

THIS IS NOT AN ORDINARY WATCH. It is as nearly perfect as the most skilled watchmakers can make a watch. The cases are the most artistic and beautiful designs brought out this year.

This watch represents the combination of the best materials and the highest watchmaking skill in the world. Not one detail is slighted. Before it leaves the factory the movement is adjusted, trued and perfectly timed. The case is inspected by experts, and must conform in finish to the highest standards set by the world's most famous watchmakers.

THE WORKS ARE THE GENUINE, ORIGINAL ELGIN, famous everywhere, made by the Elgin Watch Company of America, and its name alone is a guarantee of superiority. Any watch expert will tell you that no watch keeps better time than a 17-jeweled Elgin. The movement of this watch, of microscopic perfection, is beautifully chased and finished of solid nickel, full 17-jewels, in settings, quick train, straight line escapement, exposed pallets, compensating balance, celebrated Breguet hair spring, hardened and tempered in form, latest patent micrometric regulator, safety pinion, etc. It is stemwind and stemset. The dial is enameled, with hand-painted Arabian numerals and the name, in black.

THE HANDSOME CASE IS A GENUINE WADSWORTH, guaranteed for 20 years. This guarantee is not on paper and merely pasted in, but is stamped right into the metal where it can't come off and where you can show it to your admiring friends. The outside and inside are of heavy solid gold, with center reinforcement of very strong metal combination. This means that the case will retain all the beauty of its fine finish, and that the gold will wear just as long as if it were solid through and through. In fact, this case is stronger than if it were solid gold. It looks just as well as any solid gold watch. It has screw bezel and screw back, it is dust proof and damp proof. You have your choice of hand engraved, engine turned or plain case.

NOW, YOU HAVE BEEN WANTING A WATCH—a good one. You don't want a cheap one, the common premium kind, one that will take frequent trips to the watch hospital and never keep correct time and that will disgust you so you will throw it away. You want a good one, the kind that a young man like you should own, one you can be proud to wear and enjoy all your life. This is the kind you get from us for a few hours of your time.

Yours for selling only $25.00 worth of Walker products.

Walker Products are necessities—such things as your family and your neighbors are using—must use—every day. See partial list at left. This is no cheap post-card or trashy-jewelry scheme to separate people from their money and give little or nothing in return. Ours are not the kind of goods that people buy from an agent as a charity or merely to get rid of him as in cheap schemes. When taking orders for Walker Products—household necessities—you hold up your head like a man and look your customers straight in the eye because this a regular, honest, straightforward business proposition from start to finish. We will stand back of you and give you and your customers the quality and kind of service that will make it easy for you to get more orders from them, so you will have a permanent, profitable business with the same people.

Everything sold on its own merits and in competition with best storekeepers' goods in quality and price. And everything guaranteed to be satisfactory.

Sell this Assortment and Take the Watch

No.	*Article*	*Price*	*Amt.*
3 cans	Ammonia	15c	$ .45
20 each	Bag Blue	5c	1.00
10 pkgs.	Baking Soda	10c	1.00
6 cans	Baking Powder	25c	1.50
3 bots.	Bay Rum	25c	.75
2 bxs.	Carbolic Salve	25c	.50
10 pkgs.	Carnation Sachet Powder	10c	1.00
6 bxs.	Corn Starch	10c	.60
10 pkgs.	Court Plaster	5c	.50
4 jars	Cold Cream	25c	1.00
4 bots.	Furniture Polish	25c	1.00
6 bots.	Hydrogen Peroxide	20c	1.20
8 cakes	Laundry Wax	10c	.80
4 bots.	Flavor Extract, Lemon	25c	1.00
5 bots.	Flavor Extract, Vanilla	25c	1.25
8 tubes	Liquid Glue	10c	.80
	Toilet Soap		
1 box	Medicated Skin (3 cakes)	30c	.30
2 bxs.	Sweet Clover (3 cakes)	25c	.50
2 bxs.	Violet Supreme (3 cakes)	25c	.50
4 cans	Metal Polish	25c	1.00
3 bots.	Rose Perfume	50c	1.50
2 bots.	Rose Water	50c	1.00
10 bxs.	Scouring Powder	10c	1.00
10 bxs.	Shoe Polish Paste	10c	1.00
3 cakes	Silver Soap	10c	.30
5 bxs.	Soap Powder	10c	.50
2 bots.	Straw Hat Cleaner	25c	.50
7 cans	Talcum Powder	15c	1.05
6 cans	Tooth Powder	25c	1.50
			$25.00

Make your own selection of $25.00 worth from above list, if preferred.

How to Start

Sign your name in the blank below. **Do it today.** Get your postmaster or a well-known business man to sign his name below yours certifying that you are honest and worthy of confidence and that he believes you intend paying us. Then mail it to us. On receipt of the goods or before, take orders from your parents, friends, relatives, neighbors or acquaintances and then deliver them and within 15 days from the day you get them send us our money. When we receive the money we will send you the watch as promised, by registered mail so you will be sure to get it.

It Should Take You Only a Couple of Days

to close out your order and earn the fine watch offered. People would rather order from you and help you get a start in business than to buy the same kind of goods from dealers. We offer hundreds of other premiums which you want, in a catalogue we will mail you, so when you have disposed of one order and see that we do as we say, you can order another consignment and continue to act as our agent and do a regular business on our capital. This easy start in a legitimate business may mean the beginning of a successful commercial career.

WM. & HAY WALKER, No. 1047 Herr's Island, PITTSBURGH, PA.

TO WM. & HAY WALKER, 1047 HERR'S ISLAND, PITTSBURGH, PA.

If you consign to me the assortment of Walker Products listed in your Elgin Watch advertisement, or $25.00 worth of your Products of my own selection from the same list, I will sell them at the prices named and within 15 days from the day I get them I will send you your money, $25.00. When you get your money you are to send me the genuine 17-jeweled Elgin movement in the 20-year gold-filled Wadsworth case as promised.

Signed..*Street*..

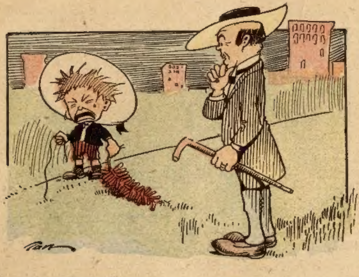
No Money in Advance. *P. O.*..

REFERENCE: I know the above named person and believe the same is honest and able and willing to do as agreed.

Signed..*Business*..

Walker Pays the Freight. **MAIL THIS AT ONCE!**

NOT WHOLLY HAPPY.



"What's the matter, son?"

"Boo—hoo—oooo! Here I got a big bunch of firecrackers an' a dandy piece of string an' I can't find no dog anywhere!"

We're All Pinched.

In a Fourth of July address Mayor Samuel L. Shank of Indianapolis once said, apropos of George Washington and truthfulness:

"Few of us, alas, can lay claim to that absolute veracity which was Washington's boast. Thus the shoe pinches us all when the story of little Jack Smith comes up.

"Little Jack Smith's Sunday-school teacher, after a lesson on Ananias and Sapphira, said:

"'Why is not everybody who tells a lie struck dead?'

"Little Jack answered gravely:

"'Because there wouldn't be anybody left.'"

Room for One More.

An archbishop was urging one of his senatorial friends to help the church with his presence, but the Senator declined to be a regular churchgoer, giving the reason:

"One finds so many hypocrites there."

"But there is always room for one more," said the genial prelate, as he gripped the hand of his statesman friend.

A Poor Guesser.

Wedmore—Before I married, I learned to live on half my income.

Singleton—And found that it was a wise step, eh?

Wedmore—Yes, only a half was the wrong proportion—I should have made it an eighth.

A Hero in His Car.

Algy—I find that motoring agrees with me much better than horseback riding.

Genevieve—You certainly look much better in an automobile than you do on horseback.

An Unfriendly Act.

"Did you say you bought the car from a friend?"

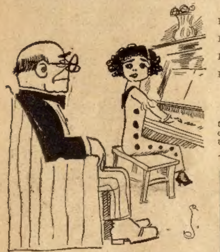
"Well, I thought he was a friend until he sold it to me."

THE HAS AND THE ARE.

I'd rather be a could be
  If I could not be an are;
For a could be is a may be,
  With a chance of touching par.
I'd rather be a has been
  Than a might have been, by far;
For a might have been has never been,
  But a has was once an are.

Texas Style.

Texas will never recall the judge who thrashed, in open court, the man who called him a liar, and then, returning to the bench, fined himself for fighting.



Masie Sweetnotes—I'm going to have my voice tried.

Lawyer Uncle—If you do it will be convicted.

Overestimating It.

"Mr. Higgsworthy," said the chairman of the committee of arrangements for celebrating the Fourth, "we shall need a lot of money for fireworks and I have come to you first for a contribution."

"Well," the leading citizen answered, "I'll give a dollar as a starter."

"As a 'starter'! Mr. Higgsworthy, that isn't even a nudge!"

Auto Aristocracy.

"He has a grudge against the plain people."

"On what score?"

"Says they wear so many rubbers that it forces up the price of tires."

Not a Bill.

"There was a strange man here to see you today, papa," said little Ethel, as she ran to meet her father in the hall.

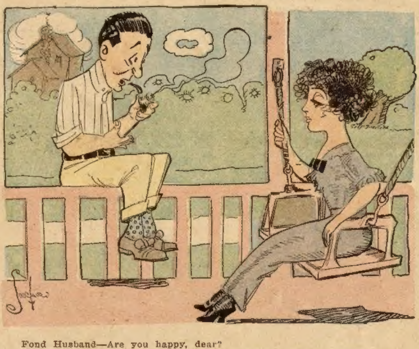
"Did he have a bill?"

"No, papa; he had just a plain nose."

Right.

Drill Sergeant (after worrying Brown for two hours)—Right about face.

Brown—Thank goodness. I'm right about something at last!



Fond Husband—Are you happy, dear?

His Wife—I'm within a hat and two gowns and a parasol of being so.

Bang!

"Very clever, isn't he?"

"Yes."

"I'm told that his three older brothers are mentally weak."

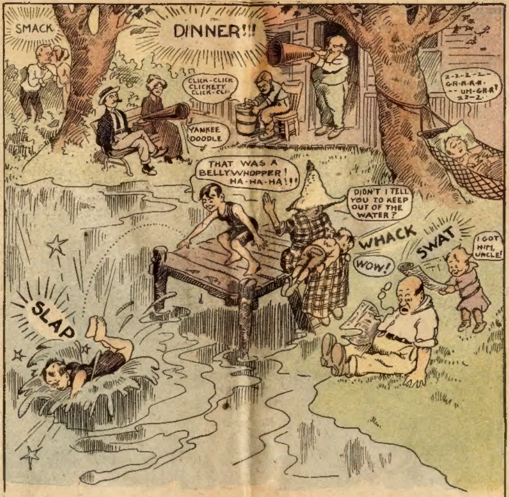
"Yes, he's the original sane fourth."

Very Sensible.

"I have sold my old typewriter."

"You were sensible. Jinx married his."

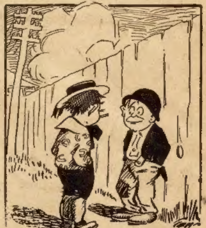
ALLOWABLE NOISES FOR THE FOURTH.


SMACK
DINNER!!!
CLICK-CLICK CLICKETY CLICK-CLI
YANKEE DOODLE
Z-Z-Z-Z- GR-R-R-R- -- UM-GR-R? ZZ-Z-
THAT WAS A BELLYWHOPPER! HA-HA-HA!!!
DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO KEEP OUT OF THE WATER?
WHACK
SWAT
I GOT HIM, UNCLE!
WOW!
SLAP

Tiresome Jokes.

Low Comedian—These newspaper jokes about theatrical companies bursting up and the actors walking home are getting rather tiresome.

Heavy Man (reflectively)—Yes, but not half so tiresome as the—the walking.



Joey—Say, Eddie, what's your highest ambition?

Eddie—De top of a telegraph pole at a ball game.

Not Bad.

"Elsie," said her mother to a little 5-year-old who had just finished saying her prayers, "did you ask God to forgive you for being naughty today?"

"Yes, mamma, I did," replied the child, "and God said, 'My dear child, there's lots of 'em worser'n you are!'"

A Sign.

A sign hung in a conspicuous place in a store in Lawrence: "Man is made of dust. Dust settles. Are you a man?"

His Job.

"I never worry or hurry."

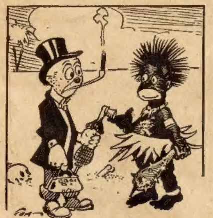
"What department of the Government service are you in?"

Tellit—His own.

High-Pressure Civilization.

Stranger—I don't see how an old man can get around New York without being run over.

New Yorker—By the time a man gets old in New York, he's rich enough to have a carriage, or else he's in a lunatic asylum.



Traveler—Are the natives becoming civilized?

Chief—Gradually. Eighteen of the chiefs played a game of baseball last week, and only four umpires were killed.

Independence.

"Well, Binksey," said Jiggers, genially, "did you celebrate the Fourth of July in fitting manner?"

"You bet I did," said Binksey, with a swelling chest.

"What did you do?" asked Jiggers.

"I read the Declaration of Independence to my mother-in-law," said Binksey.

"Phee-ew!" whistled Jiggers. "You are a brave man, aren't you?"

"Oh, not so very," said Binksey. "I did it over the long-distance wire."

To Enjoy a Celebration.

Binks—Yes, my family took in the whole Paris Exposition, and it about half killed us. Such crowds! I thought sometimes we'd never get home alive.

Minks—My family enjoyed the Paris Exposition immensely.

"I don't see how."

"We stayed at home and read about it."

Quoted.

Returned Delegate—I made two speeches at the convention which nominated justices for the Supreme Court. Did you see me quoted?

Constituent—Yes. I saw by one of the papers that a lot of you were selling at six hundred dollars apiece.

A Football Rush.

"Did you get any of that bargain ribbon?"

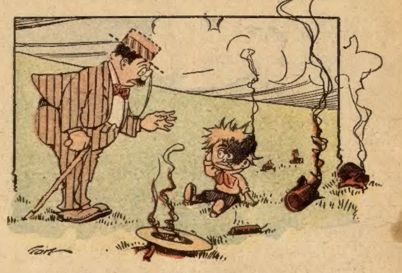
"Yes," answered the college girl proudly. "I bucked the line for ten yards."

A Dig at the Actor.

Footlights—So you've seen my Hamlet. Well, what do you think of it?

Critical Friend—I prefer Shakespeare's.

CHEAP.



"Isn't it very expensive to fire off those big crackers, my boy?"

"Naw! My father's a doctor!"

Romance vs. Fiction.

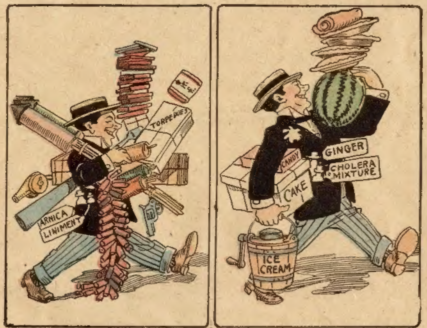
When a very rich man marries a very poor girl, that's romance. When a very rich girl marries a very poor man, that's fiction.

Every Little Helps.

Figg—I'm on my way to the dentist's to have a tooth pulled.

Fogg—Ah, that will give you more room in your flat.

See What the Saner Fourth Idea Has Done to "The Day Before."


AS IT USED TO BE. AS IT IS TODAY.

Also the Roast!

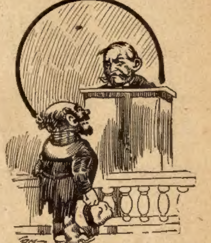
"Too many cooks spoil the broth."

"Far too many!"

They Seldom Do.

"I hope your husband has no secrets from you."

"Not many. However, he never would tell me what he paid for the engagement ring."



The Magistrate—Have you ever tried to find work?

Felix Hawsted—Sure! I've filed me application fer de position of sportin' editor of de Congressional Record.

Has Its Drawbacks.

A couple of South Side boys were discussing the safe and sane Fourth.

"They ain't goin' t' be no firecrackers," ruefully observed one.

"No, but there's a big circus a few days later, and I'm going to that."

"A circus is all right in its place," the first boy replied, "but you can't shoot it."

Hotel Life.

Jackson—What time do you wake up in the morning usually?

Jimson—Four o'clock.

"Great snakes! Why so early?"

"I board at a hotel, and that's the hour the man in the next room goes to bed."

A Feminine Definition.

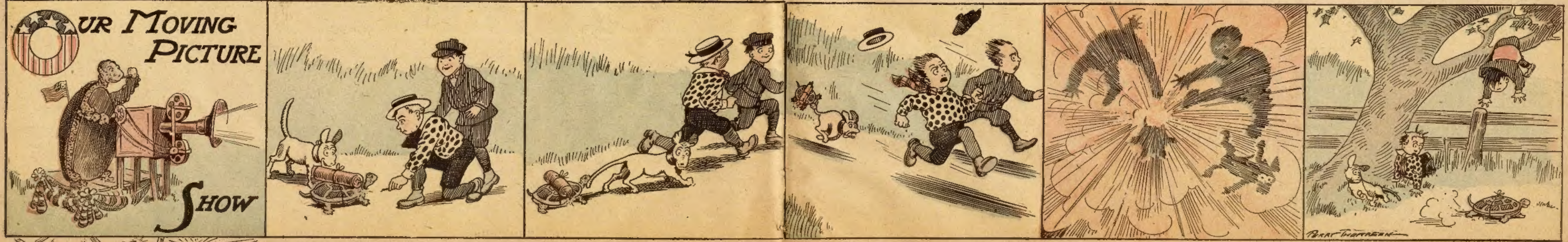
A little girl when asked to define the human and animal families replied. "A brute is an imperfect beast; man is a perfect beast."

An Opening.

"What a singular girl you are!"

"Well, that can be altered."

HOW IT WORKED.



"There, old turtle! Now, we'll run down the road and watch the fun!"

"I'll bet it puts a big dent in the turtle's back!"

"Look out, Red! Run for your life, he's hanging to the pup's tail!"

Bang!!——!!——!!!

"Wow! Just look at him! he never batted an eye!"

In Extremity.

"Do you think he would be cool in time of danger?"

"I think his feet would."

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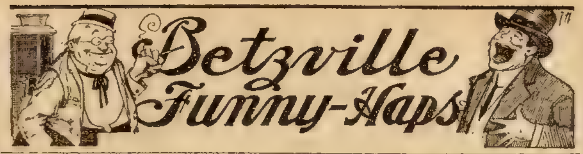


Otis Brupp and the Bull

By Ellis Parker Butler

(Copyright by W. G. Chapman.)

OTIS BRUPP, of this village, lost a valuable animal a couple of years ago, when the front of Miss Susan Philbin's Millinery Emporium fell out during the fire that destroyed it and killed his prize bull Otis had the misfortune to have his pasture next door to the fire house of the Betzville Relentless Hose Company, and every time the hose company put on its red shirts to run to a fire the bull would snort angrily and jump the pasture fence and pursue the hose company. It was no uncommon sight to see the hose company gather at the sound of the alarm bell and immediately start at full speed in a direction opposite to the fire, with the bull in full pursuit. Usually the hose company would climb one or more trees when the bull neared them and the bull, after failing to uproot the trees, would eat a few yards of rubber hose off the hose reel, and then go home. But the day of the Millinery Emporium fire, the bull made the mistake of chasing the fire company toward the fire, and the wall fell on it, causing it to become immediately dead. Ordinarily a bull of the strong character of Otis' would not be harmed by so small an event, but Otis' bull's constitution had been weakened by indigestion caused by the consumption of too much fire hose. So it died

When Otis bought a new bull calf, after the fire, he felt that he must do something to avoid a similar catastrophe, and to prevent the calf eating rubber hose, and with his usual clear-sightedness he saw that the reason the bull followed the fire company was because the company wore red shirts, which angered the bull. Mrs. Brupp suggested getting a phonograph to play to the bull calf when the fire bell rang, for music has charms to soothe the savage breast, but Otis said that what he wanted was not a preventative but a cure, and that the best cure would be to take the bull calf while it was still young and accustom it to red, so that it would not hate red, but love it.

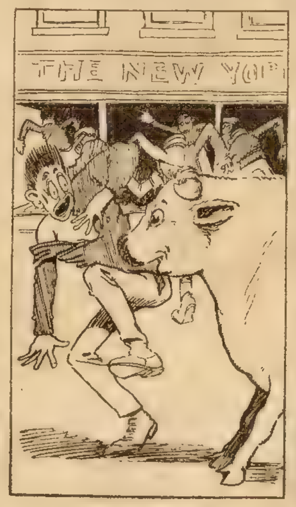
Otis was always a man to do immediately what he set about doing, but he saw that a love for red would have to be sown in the calf's soul gradually. He would have to connect the idea of joy and red in the calf's mind. So the first thing he did was to think what gave the calf joy, and hay seemed to give the calf about as much joy as anything. So he got some hay and dyed it red, and put it before the calf, and the result was not what he had expected. The bull calf swelled up with rage and danced on the hay ferociously, and for six weeks it would not even look at hay. Even the smell of hay threw it into convulsions.

So Otis had to begin all over again, and he began by getting some hay and boiling it until all the hay odor was boiled out of it, and then he bleached it and dried and offered it to the calf, and the calf ate it with every evidence of joy. It did not seem to mind snowwhite, odorless hay at all. So the next lot of hay Otis boiled and bleached, and then put the slightest bit of pink dye in a tub of water and dyed the hay a pale, pale pink. It was so slightly pink that it was hardly a tint. And the calf ate that hay joyfully. After that every load of hay Otis deodorized, he dyed a little pinker, and a little pinker, and gradually he introduced into the hay an odor of woolen shirt, and he kept making the hay redder and redder, and the woolen shirt odor stronger and stronger until the hay was as red as the fire company's shirts and smelled about the same. And the calf would eat hay greedily with joy. By that time the calf had become a full-grown bull, and was strong and hearty, and Otis was the happiest man in Betzville, for the bull did not grow angry at the sight of red woolen shirts at all. If anything, the sight of a red woolen shirt gave it emotions of pleasure.

But the bull was rather expensive. It had become passionately fond of red hay with a woolen shirt odor, and any one who has ever tried it knows how costly it is to bleach hay and deodorize it, and then dye it red and impregnate it with otto of wool. So Otis decided to drop the red hay diet gradually, for the bull was cured. He cut down the bull's ration of red wool hay, and cut it down, until he cut it off entirely, and it was then that the bull began to show signs of uneasiness and wistful longing. By the sixth of May the bull was showing loss of appetite and high temperature, and the sixth of May was the annual parade day of the Betzville firemen, when the three companies, the Relentless, the Fearsome and the Hasty, paraded. As the Relentless boys lined up in front of their hose house, the bull stood at the fence and looked on with love and longing, licking its chops and sniffing the odor of red woolen shirt, and when the company marched off to join the parade, the bull lowed piteously.

But only for a few moments. Suddenly its love of red woolen shirt overcame it, and it hopped over the pasture fence and hastened after the parade, and when it reached Main street and saw the three full companies lined up in red shirts it gave a cry of joy The firemen thought the bull was angry, but this was a great mistake; it was merely foolishly fond, as Otis had taught it to be, of red shirts. The first fireman it caught lost his red shirt in about a minute, and before the bull had swallowed it the parade had stopped parading and was dispersing hastily, shedding red woolen shirts as it went, until Main street glowed red, like a field of battle.

The bull uttered a few joyful exclamations and started in at one end of Main street, eating red woolen shirts, and ate to the other end. It is believed he ate sixty-four red woolen shirts, mostly double-breasted, brass buttons and all. At the end of the feast he contained more woolen shirts than any shirt store west of Chicago and north of St. Louis, and the last thing he did was to sigh a a deep sigh of content and lie down on his back and stick his four legs in the air. Otis says the bull died of joy, but Doc Weaver, our talented cow doctor, says the cause of his death was eighteen dozen brass buttons in the vermiform appendix.



Lost his red shirt.

Next week's laugh will be called "McDooble and Gobble." Get the Ledger and see what it is all about.

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Jealous of Herself.

(Continued from page two.)

just where we're at!" said Ferguson, presumably a little out of patience. "In one breath you tell me you are going to marry Miss Bentley, and the next you get into a white heat about the other one. Hope you haven't forgotten the old maxim, 'It's best to be off with the old love before you're on with the new'."

"I'm going to bed," said Jerome, abruptly. "But first tell me, do you think Miss Bentley cared for me, or did she nurse me as she woud any other luckless dog. Did she nurse me, or was I just 'a case'?"

The two had been fencing this way since Berenice sailed, Ferguson afraid to encourage Jerome's interest in the nurse. It was good to see Jerome fire up at any reflection on his first love. He looked earnestly at the thin, white face before him.

"I think Miss Bentley took pride in her work," he replied, "but she preferred to nurse you."

Jerome looked dissatisfied

"Thanks; good night," he said, and stalked out of the room.

Ferguson stared thoughtfully at the lamp, then he picked up a book; but it was useless, he could not read. He had come to like Jerome more than any man he had ever known, and he believed that if ever a man was true blue to the core, that man was Jerome Fairchild. Yet here he was wavering between two women, as he supposed, and Ferguson could not find out which one had first place in his heart. Ferguson had to give it up. For while Jerome's whole nature was like an open book, the mystery of his heart was past finding out.

For the second time the Doctor picked up his book. This time he was interrupted by the thought of a face he had noticed in the crowd of passengers leaving the ship earlier in the evening—only that sufficient time had not elapsed, he would have thought it was Berenice returning in some new disguise.

"I'll do it!"

He dismissed the thought, and tried to think of Puntos. Again he tried to read, but the face seen at the landing-stage came between him and the pages. He resolved to look at the newly-arrived nurses. He concluded that the stranger was one, and once more dismissed the face and everything else, dozing lightly in his comfortable chair.

A knock on the door brought the Doctor suddenly to his feet.

"Some one wishes to see you," announced the man, and closed the door.

A woman approached Ferguson, and he looked at her in astonishment. It was the face that had reminded him of Berenice.

"Doctor Ferguson?" she asked, timorously.

Ferguson bowed gravely.

"I'm Amabel Marther," said the visitor. "You wrote to me. I couldn't come before. I hope I'm not too late to be useful."

Ferguson looked as though he could eat the sweet, wistful face. He turned his eyes toward the lamp and adjusted the burner, fearing to frighten her with his devouring glance.

Amabel was really very beautiful, when Berenice was not by to outshine her. But Ferguson had never seen the actress without the coarse, red hair and rough complexion which Berenice knew so well how to apply.

Ferguson assured Amabel that she was not too late. He offered her a chair and prepared to talk, inviting her confidence with every look. Soon she had told him all that has been made known to the reader, withholding nothing, and concluded by asking him to send for her cousin. Ferguson, realizing how great the disappointment of not seeing her cousin after such a journey was going to be, put off the evil moment as long as possible.

Amabel's eyes fell beneath the earnest tenderness of the Doctor's.

"I'm so sorry," he murmured, and explained what had happened, and how they were returning to the States soon. He would get permission for her to return also.

Poor Amabel had difficulty in restraining the tears that would come in spite of everything. She rose to go. Then she put out her little hand, and the Doctor took it in his big paw.

"You've been so good to us all," she said, gently. "And I thank you sincerely."

Ferguson was loath to drop her hand, and kept her a little longer while he instructed her in her tactics with Jerome.

"You see," he explained, "your cousin was emphatic on that point. It seemed that they had given their word not to meet for a year, and as far as Jerome knows, they haven't."

"Oh, you dear, brave little thing!" Amabel whispered. Aloud she said, "Isn't she a darling, Doctor Ferguson?"

The Doctor agreed enthusiastically, and finally allowed her to go. His parting glance had brought a lovely color to her cheek. On reaching her room she clasped her hands ecstatically

"Oh," she breathed, "he's the material of which real heroes are made! I knew it before I ever saw him."

CHAPTER XIII.

The palace behind the hills referred to by Puntos as Celasquex's hiding-place was the headquarters for the rebel hillmen, and the seat of the uprising which Captain Bradley had set out to quell

The palace was built in the old Spanish fashion. At present it answered for a prison as well Oblong rows of rooms or cells surrounded a stone-paved square with a well in the center. The walls were of blocks of stone, and the big doors were heavy hardwood bars. The very place spoke of the fiendish cunning of the man. It was in this place where Celasquex punished any mutiny among his followers.

He was happy in the thought that Jerome was dead. While Berenice was mourning for him, Celasquex would be safe until his interests and ambition would suffer him to leave the Philippines.

His furious surprise on seeing Berenice on the boat was signified in his insane willingness to throw all hopes and ambitions to the winds and follow her. He recognized at once the graceful bow and the wave of the hands. But if there had been any doubt of her identity in the Spaniard's mind, the shrinking terror on her face when she recognized him was sufficient proof. He had seen the same look once before when he threatened to kill her and any lover she might choose in preference to him.

What could have brought her there but her love for Jerome, and what was taking her back in such a happy frame of mind puzzled the crafty conspirator. Could it be that his enemy was not dead after all? He must find out at once

And find out Celasquex did. That same night he heard nearly all the conversation between Jerome and Ferguson. While the lamplight fell on the emaciated face of the chaplain, his enemy glowering at him, in fiendish rage, throught the uncurtained window.

"In a few weeks he will be well enough to go home," he cursed. "It shall never be. I'll do the trick myself. None of these hellish blunderers shall thwart my desires. He shall never again turn those soft eyes of his on my darling senorita. I'll kill him!"

The evening preceding Puntos' disappearance, a mysterious person hovered around the quarters occupied by Ferguson and Jerome. There were several doors opening from their apartments onto a court where a fountain played in the center. The water dripping on the stones would have drowned the light footfalls of the curious stranger, but Puntos, ever alert, espied him as he peered inquisitively into the room where Jerome was dozing in the twilight.

The man was dressed in native garb, though he was distinctly Spanish, not

(Continued on page nineteen.)

30 DAYS FREE TRIAL WITHOUT ANY MONEY IN ADVANCE

WHY In the World People Will Pay outrageous prices to agents and dealers for so-called standard make separators is more than we can figure out It's so wasteful—so extravagant—so needless. There's absolutely no better separator on earth than Smyth's Best 1912 Perfected Life-Time Guaranteed separators and the price is only $16.95 up to 900 lbs. capacity. Now then, to show you, to get you started and allow you to compare our separators without risk with the high priced so-called standard makes, we will send you one of Smyth's Best perfected 1912 Life Time Guaranteed Separators on 30 Days' FREE Trial without money — without risk Then, you use it hard, every night and morning 30 days 60 times. Test it any way you like, compare it with any separator you know of, no matter how high priced it is, and if you find our separator inferior or unsatisfactory for any reason whatever, return it at our expense and you will be out only your trouble. We guarantee Smyth's Best Separators a lifetime and to skim as close as any separator on earth, bar none—99 100 per cent at 80 degrees or no sale. They're simply constructed, no complicated parts, nothing to get out of order. Everything the best. No wear out Phosphor Bronze Bearings, interchangeable parts, self-adjustable flexible neck bearings, bowl always true, germ proof combination wing and disc skimming device As easy to clean as a sauce dish. It's easiest running because of our patent Helical gear, vertical shafts and ball bearings. Don't buy anywhere, but first write for our big Special Cream Separator Catalog see the fine colored pictures of all our separators at $16.95 up, read the descriptions, then pick out the separator you want and let us send it to you without money at our risk on 30 days' free trial.

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No woman need any longer dread the pains of childbirth. Dr. J. H. Dye devoted his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He has proved that the pain at childbirth need no longer be feared by woman and we will gladly tell you how it may be done absolutely free of charge. Send your name and address to Dr. J. H. Dye Medical Institute, 200 Lewis Block, Buffalo, N. Y., and we will send you, postpaid, his wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without fear of pain, also how to become a mother. Do not delay, but write TO-DAY.

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Send for 12 packs Grandpa's Hair Tonic. New thing. Easy to sell. Entirely new proposition. Everybody needs it. When sold return $1.20 and get these four beautiful Rings. We give extra premiums FREE. HOWARD & CO., 800 Park St., Palmyra, Pa.

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We will ship you Schmidt's Chilled Cylinder Gasoline Engine on your simple request, without an order or any promise from you. You use the engine 10 entire days—use it all you want to. Then, if you don't want it, send it back at our expense. If you wish to keep it, pay us only $7.50 and you can pay the rest in the easiest monthly payments.

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This is the first genuine free trial ever offered on a gasoline engine for farm and shop use. We want you to see that women and children can run this engine. Use the engine to run your pumps and any machinery you have

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If you like this engine after trying it out for 10 whole days, you can keep it and take a long time to pay for it, on easy monthly payments.

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Operating our wonderful CHAMPION PICTURE MACHINE. Takes, develops, finishes perfect pictures in 30 seconds; 300 an hour. The 20th Century Marvel! No dark room. Work completed in broad daylight. Experience unnecessary. "Instructions are so simple my monkey can operate it," writes J. T. Thomas (Thomas & Pearl Circus), Gifford, S. C. "Far exceeds my expectations," writes O. W. Finney, Boise City, Idaho. "Owners of these machines can make as high as 800% profit," says Dun's Review, N. Y. City "In a couple of hours took in $4.65; a sure money-maker."—W. E. Darby, Hobart, Okla. "Gives better results than any I have seen."—L. V. Duncan, Anderson, S. C. "As a money-maker, comes next to moving picture machines."—New York Tageblatt. Hundreds of other testimonials from press and users.

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Elegantly engraved THIN MODEL, GOLD FINISHED double Hunting case, 7 jewel American lever movement, stem wind and stem set. 20 year guarantee sent with each watch. Long gold finished chain for Ladies, fob or vest chain for Gents Free.

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150 ACRES CITRUS FRUIT LAND ABSOLUTELY FREE.

Join rapidly growing American colonies in country backed by Uncle Sam. No revolutions. Ideal healthy climate. Hundreds of American canal employes settling in famous Chiriqui Province, Panama. No better land for citrus fruits, including grape fruit, alligator pears, etc. All vegetables and cotton, corn, tobacco, coffee, cocoa, sugar cane thrive on these lands. No irrigation required. Cattle graze all year. Homesteads of 50 acres at 50c per acre. We tell you how to get a large farm absolutely free and send you book of liberal land laws just published all for 50c. We have no land to sell. Simpson-Mitchell Engineers, 1002 Flatiron Building, New York

You Can Make $6.00 PER 100 COLLECTING YOUR neighbors names for our Directory —all kinds of names wanted. Send 10 cents postage for blank book and Outfit—We want a million names quick. ROCKWELL DIRECTORY CO., OGDEN PARK, CHICAGO, ILL.

Why not keep in style? Make your light mustache a rich brown or black. Use BUCKINGHAM'S DYE

If your druggist cannot supply you, send 50 cents to R. P. HALL & CO., Nashua, N. H.

Clothing Salesmen Wanted

$150.00 Per Month and expenses made by all our active men selling our popular line of clothing. No experience necessary—no capital required—no commission plan—no house to house canvass. You regulate your profits to suit yourself. This is high grade employment at high wages.

Nearly All Our Men Make $40.00 Every Week in the Year

Our Plan: We ship by prepaid express big outfit of cloth samples, lithograph fashion plates, tape measure, order blanks, advertising matter, everything free. We operate the largest mills in the U.S. and sell goods cheaper than any other house in the world. Finest tailored, all wool suits, $7.50 up. No difficulty getting orders at these prices. Everything guaranteed. Don't buy a suit or overcoat anywhere at any price until you see our amazing offer and biggest, lowest priced clothing line in U.S.

THE OLD WOOLEN MILLS CO. Adams and Market Sts. Department 801 CHICAGO

Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879

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ADVERTISING.

Advertising rate $2.25 per Agate Line, per insertion for advertisements in the The Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,000,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

Have a good time on the Fourth.

Learn what not to do—then don't do it.

Remember not to shoot the Fourth full of holes.

Even love's young dream occasionally dies of old age.

One way to make money fast is to nail it to the floor.

A man's long face may be due to the fact that he is short.

And some men act as if it were a crime to kiss their wives.

Those who celebrate the sane Fourth live to enjoy their moderation.

When a woman starts out as a reformer she begins on some man.

Though June brides are greatly prized there is no discount on July brides.

Many a married woman envies her cook because of her salary and evenings off.

All the way up to fifthly the rules for the Fourth should read: "Don't be foolish."

A man seldom appreciates how much a woman appreciates a man's appreciation.

It is possible to show appreciation of the day without the aid of dynamite in any form.

Some cities will celebrate the day with flights of oratory and some with aeroplane flights

If a man lives to be 40 and has never been in love, he might just as well be chloroformed.

During courtship a man thinks the girl in the case is dear to him; after marriage he knows she is.

Judicious management of fireworks and firewaters will do much toward making the day presentable.

You might gather the children around your knee and tell them of the horrors of the old time insane Fourth.

As a change from light summer reading make a shift to the fine old declaration which T. Jefferson dashed off.

It's easy to be popular. All you have to do is to make other people believe they know a lot more than you do.

We wonder what the sky will look like when the world celebrates the one hundredth anniversary of successful aviation.

Formerly the advice for the day was, "Keep the wounds open." Now everybody recognizes the folly of celebrating with homicidal frenzy.

A Costly Meal.

Fred Swantacruz, king of the cooling surf, was talking one day with a fisherman in Monterey Bay, and drew from him a yarn all covered with seaweed.

The facts in the case were said to be these: Some ten years ago the Government transplanted about 20,000 Eastern lobsters in Monterey Bay. Before shipping, wooden pegs had been put in their claws so that they couldn't fight with each other en route to this coast. Before transplanting those in charge neglected to remove the wooden pegs, with the result that the lobsters all died.

The Government accordingly sent another shipment and this time saw that the pegs were removed before planting the lobsters.

Some time thereafter the Albatross steamed into Monterey Bay, under the command of the United States Fish Commission, looking for results of the transplanting. Lobster traps were set at different points, but nary a lobster was captured. The Government then posted notices offering $2,000 for a specimen of the transplanted lobsters.

Two years passed. A Santa Cruz fisherman, out in his little smack, caught one of the lobsters. Then, thinking that there was a law against catching them, he sneaked the lobster to his home, cooked it, ate it and destroyed all evidence. Later he divulged the secret to some other fishermen.

"I caught a lobster sixteen inches long," he said.

"What!" they exclaimed.

"Yes, and I was afraid to sell it, so I ate it myself!"

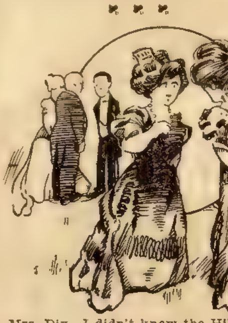
"You ate it!"

"Yes."

And they broke to him the sad news that there was a reward of $2,000 for a sample lobster from the bay.

"And I had a $2,000 meal," said the fisherman and fainted.

* * *



Mrs. Dix—I didn't know the Hikes had children; I hear her speaking of Walter, Ralphy and Jojo.

Mrs. Nozall—She hasn't. Wallie is the canary, Ralphy the goldfish, and Jojo is the poodle that bit the janitor.

* * *

Good Business.

H. A. Harris, the champion pistol shot, told a shooting story at a supper in San Francisco.

"There was a party of amateurs here in Frisco," he said, "who thought they'd do some live pigeon shooting; so they ordered thirty birds from a suburban dealer.

"The shoot came off duly. It was a wonder. To give you a correct idea of it, I must quote from a letter sent by the dealer to the amateurs the next day. The letter ran:

"'Gentlemen: I thank you for your order, and beg to state that I will be only too happy to supply you with birds for all future shoots. The entire thirty pigeons, for which you paid me fifteen cents a head, returned home safely, and, moreover, brought two strays with them. My price to you hereafter will be one cent per pigeon.'"

* * *

Did Not Shoot Any.

There is a certain business man in New York who prides himself on his ability to tell funny stories. Of course there may be others, but this story concerns only this one man. He recently returned from a European trip, and though he has a very decided strain of Scotch blood in his veins he thinks the Scots are, as he expressed it, "the limit."

During his stay in Europe he had occasion to travel from London to Edinburgh, and in the same compartment with him was a Scotchman. The American, to be entertaining, told all his best stories without getting an answering grin from the Scot. Every time the American concluded and waited for the laugh he had been accustomed to hear, his companion raised a grave face and ejaculated "Aye?" in a questioning sort of way.

At last the American's patience was exhausted, and in thorough disgust he announced:

"You Scotchmen couldn't see a joke if it was shot at you with a gun."

The Scot made no reply and the American settled back in his seat. After a few minutes the Scot leaned forward and, tapping the American on the knee, said:

"Aye, mon, but ye didna shoot onny."

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (Z)

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

* * *

Truthful Bill.

Bill Flint was a mute, inglorious Edward Payson Weston, with a dash of the Wandering Jew, and, like George Washington, his veracity batting was 1,000. He was a Massachusetts farmhand, but about once in every two or three years the wanderlust would hit him, he would pack up his old knapsack and disappear down the dusty road, for three, six or sometimes twelve months. His last disappearance had spanned eleven months to a day. It was September when he returned, picked up a cutter and began to reap the corn.

"Whar you bin, Bill?" asked the farmer, who always took him back.

"Bin to Floridy," said Bill.

"Walk all the way?"

"No," said Bill, "I can't honestly say I did. You see, 'bout ten mile south o' Charleston a feller came along in a waggin an' offered me a lift. Couldn't see why I should walk ef I didn't have to, an' he was pretty insistent, like them Southerners when they set out to be hospitable. So I had to climb in, an' I rode with him quite a spell—maybe two miles."

* * *

One-Man Power.

In a Fourth of July oration in Denver, N. C. Goodwin once remarked on the small means wherewith Washington had achieved such great ends.

"When I think," said Mr. Goodwin, "of Washington's terrible handicap, my mind goes back to the town of Nola Chucky.

"An actor manager was to appear for one night in Nola Chucky, and accordingly he wired the proprietor of the Nola Chucky opera house:

"'Will hold rehearsal tomorrow afternoon. Have stage manager, stage carpenter, property man and assistant chief electrician and all stage hands at theater prompt to hour.'

"He received this telegram in reply: "'He will be there.'"

* * *

A Valuable Secret.

Magistrate—How did you manage to extract the man's watch from his pocket, when it was provided with a safety catch?

Prisoner—Excuse me, sir, that is a professional secret. I am willing to teach you, however, for $10.

WANT ADS

FARMS FOR SALE

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C., 88 acres, subdivided into 2 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Owner forced to realize thereon. ¼ cash, balance easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane, Wash. Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dulmage, Morgan Park, Illinois

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

START a Mailing Bureau at home, spare time. Instructions, 10c. Many advertisers pay big for having circulars mailed to people. F. Sammons, Parkdale, Ark.

MISCELLANEOUS

BARGAIN—Three fine neckties $1. Gold plated Pin free. Ties and pin retail at $2.50. This offer is for short time only. Send $1 at once. Money refunded by return mail if not satisfied. Name colors desired. W. C. Watkins, Parnassus, Pa.

BROTHER accidentally discovered root will cure both tobacco habit and indigestion; gladly send particulars. R. O. Stokes, Mohawk, Florida.

PICTURES, Drugs, Books, Gentlemen like. Samples 10c postage. List 2c. Ord. Long Beach, Calif.

PATENTS

PATENTS That Protect—Patent your ideas; they may bring you wealth; 64 page book free. Fitz Gerald & Co., Dept. W, Washington, D. C.

SONGWRITERS

SONGWRITERS:—Write at once for our exceptional and liberal free song publishing offer. Keith's Music Company, Long Branch, N. J.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES can make shields at home; $10 per 100; work sent prepaid to reliable women, Particulars for stamped addressed envelope. Eureka Co, Dept. 17, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

PERFECTION Cherry Seeder seeds, stems at same time; does not crush fruit. 35c prepaid. Morehouse Supply Co., Des Moines, Ia.

WANT ADS

Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

AUTOMOBILES FOR SALE

1907 White Steamer, splendid condition, good tires, freight paid. $185.00. Trippe, Toms River, N. J.

AGENTS WANTED

STARK BRO'S, Louisiana, Mo., Big Idea in tree selling. Best terms known to nursery world. Box 80.

DRY Goods Remnants—Greatest Bargains on Earth. Agents and storekeepers' proposition. Remnant Store, Cincinnati.

$25 Weekly taking orders for cutrate groceries. Outfit free. Progressive Table Supply Co., Toledo, Ohio.

AGENTS on salary or commission. The greatest agent's seller ever produced, every user of pen and ink buys it on sight; 200 to 500 per cent profit; one agent's sales amounted to $620 in six days; another $32 in two hours. Monroe Mfg. Co. X, 96 La Crosse, Wis.

OUR beautiful enlarged portrait Japanese Pearl Medallion pictures are great sellers. The attractiveness of the samples cannot help but get you big results. No experience necessary. Little trouble to clear $35.00 weekly above expenses. You owe it to yourself to get our proposition. We have a good thing and want you to share it with us. Consolidated Manufacturing Co., Pittsburgh, Pa.

FIVE dollars per hundred for collecting names and addresses. All or spare time, stamp for particulars. Penn Sales Co., Darby, Penna

WANTED—Agents to sell rich looking imported 36x68 rugs. $1 each. R. H. Carter, Milan, Tenn., sold 115 in four days. His profit $51. You can do as well. Write for sample offer and unique selling plan. Exclusive territory. Condun, Importer, Stonington, Maine.

AGENTS—Both sexes. Just out. The best yet. Get territory quick. Belden Supply Co., 17 East Lake st., Chicago.

AGENTS—Send ten cents for six months subscription—Agents Magazine, 305 Gibson Bldg., Salamanca, N. Y.

AGENTS make big money selling Meyer's Match Lighting Machines. Send $3 00 for sample. Express prepaid. Meyer's Machine Novelty Co., Mt. Olive, Ill.

AGENTS $10 daily, selling new Book "Titanic Steamship Disaster." Told by survivors. Write Central Book Co., B. 382, Dayton, O.

HAIR Restorer. Remarkable discovery. Grows hair on bald heads. Sample, fifty cents. Large bottle, one dollar. Guaranteed. Agents wanted. The Enterprise Co., Bradford, Pa.

HUSTLING Agents Wanted for our fast selling Sanitary Household Brushes. Steady work. Big profits. Postal brings particulars. Dept. F., Hale & Kavanek, New Britain, Conn.

PORTRAITS—Photo pillow tops, photo china plates, frames, sheet pictures, etc., at prices below the lowest and guaranteed. Rejects credited. Prompt shipments; 30 days' credit, catalogue and samples free. Jas. C. Bailey Co, H. 8., Chicago.

HELP WANTED

WANTED—Active man in each locality. To join this Society. And introduce our Memberships. Sick, accident, death benefits. All or spare time. Make $50 to $500 a month. Write. Box N L-293, Covington, Ky.

WANTED—Men and Women; for Government Positions. $80.00 month. Annual vacations. Short hours. No "layoffs." Common education sufficient. Over 12,000 appointments coming. Influence unnecessary. Farmers eligible. Send postal immediately for free list of positions open. Franklin Institute, Dep't C 31, Rochester, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT Post Office Examinations everywhere soon. Get prepared by former U. S. Civil Service Examiner. Write for Booklet B. Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED. Post Office Clerks, City and Rural Carriers. Thousands needed. Examinations soon. Trial Examination Free. Write Today. Ozment, K, St. Louis.

SOUND men, 20 to 40 years old, wanted at once in every State for Electric Railway Motormen and Conductors; $60 to $100 month; no experience necessary; fine opportunity; no strike; write immediately for application blank. Address Mgr. Z., 552 Dwight Building, Kansas City, Missouri.

SCIENTIFIC Soda Water Dispensing taught by world's largest soda fountain house. $5,500,000 capital. Young men and women wanted at once to complete correspondence course, and fill waiting positions at high wages. Write The Liquid Carbonic Company, 243 West Madison st., Chicago.

EARN $7 daily, whole or spare time, restoring faded colors in rugs and carpets. No capital. Free Booklet tells how. Wm. A. Eldred, Dept. 33, Detroit, Mich.

MEDICAL

DROPSY. I cure Dropsy. Swelling reduced in one week. Address, Dr. John T. Patterson, Dropsy Specialist, Atlanta, Ga.

PERSONAL

NEW book "Kate," 10c. Catalog books and den pictures free. Atoz Co., A-1, West Jefferson, Ohio.

LOVINE never fails. Every package guaranteed. Either sex 10c. Two packages sealed 20c. Union, Box 100N, Palatine, Illinois.

MARRIAGE paper free; best published for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

MARRY—Photos, descriptions and P. O. addresses of pretty, rich ladies and gents, want to marry, free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

MARRY Rich—Matrimonial paper of highest character, containing hundreds of photos and descriptions of marriageable people with means; mailed free, sealed; either sex. Write. One may be your ideal. Standard Cor. Club, Box 607, Grays Lake, Illinois.

MARRY—Best plan on earth, sent free photo of every lady member. The Pilot, Dept. 674, Marshall, Mich.

FREE Horoscope. Have yours accurately cast by Madame Maude, famous in England, where she foretold events for many notable people. Send 10c with date of birth for trial reading. Madame Maude, 5125 Cornell ave., Chicago.

FREE Reading by trance medium. Send date of birth—dime. Dr. Eagle, Saginaw, Michigan.

MARRY, thousands wealthy, anxious for early marriage, descriptions free. Confidential, 268 Market, San Francisco, Calif.

FREE Life Reading; send birthdate and dime postage to Dr. Smith, Dept. 86, Saginaw, Michigan.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

Why He Didn't Sell.

"I saw former Senator Blackburn when I went back home for a few square meals and to vote," said a Kentucky politician

"He's turned out to grass on a farm left him by Frank Harper adjoining the old Nantura stock farm, near Versailles, and is enjoying his retirement. Blackburn never did care much for liquor, and when out on a trip he wouldn't mind losing a flask any more than he would having a front tooth knocked out.

"He was on a Senate committee once that made a trip through the Southwest, and at Anadarko Agency, Senator Blackburn went hunting with an Indian guide detailed by Brig. Gen. Frank D. Baldwin, then a captain and Indian agent. Blackburn knew the rules about giving whisky to Indians, but Lo looked longingly at the flask and was invited to take a nip.

"When the liquor began to circulate Lo asked for another drink, and got it.

"Then he offered his rifle for a pint that Blackburn carried in his saddle pocket as a reserve supply. The offer was refused, and the Indian raised it by including his blanket. He kept on bulling the price of liquor until he had offered Blackburn his horse, saddle, bridle, rifle, blanket and clothes for that pint of whisky, the whole outfit being worth about $150.

"I asked Blackburn why he didn't sell the whisky, and he said he couldn't think of imposing on the Indian, and beside, they were twenty miles from the Agency and that pint was all the liquor he had."

◆

One Who Instructs the Public.

A listener interrupted a lecturer and was granted permission to ask a question.

"You have given us," said he, "a lot of statistics about immigration, increase of wealth, the growth of trusts, and all that. Let's see what you know about figuring yourself. How do you find the greatest common divisor?"

Slowly the orator drank a glass of water and then replied in a voice that made the gas jets quiver:

"Advertise for it."

Overstocked.

The modern Romeo helped his Juliet to descend from the vine-covered balcony.

"Dearest," he said, when she had climbed into the big motor, "shall we take away the rope ladder?"

Just then the upper window was raised and the old man leaned out. "Just you leave that 'ere ladder where it is, young feller," he cautioned. "I've got a couple more darters I want to get off my hands."

◆

Energetic Appeal.

"The violent argument you use is no argument," said young Mr. Noah Heep.

"No," replied Uncle Rasberry. "Hittin' a mule wif a fence rail ain' no ahgument, nuther, but it gits action."

◆

A Scarcity of Bait.

A Scotch class was examined in Scripture. "Can any boy or girl here tell me how Noah would be likely to use his time while on the ark?" asked the inspector.

One boy timidly showed his hand and replied:

"Please, sir, he wad fish."

"Well, yes, he might," admitted the inspector.

Another little fellow waved his hand excitedly and said:

"Please, he couldna fish very lang."

"What makes you think so, my little man?"

"Because there were only two worms in the ark."

◆

Not a First Choice.

"What did she say when you proposed to her?"

"She said that I could not possibly be her first choice; but if I cared to wait for a few years she might consider me for her second or third husband."

◆

She Was Ignorant.

Senator Williams, at a dinner in Yazoo, said in condemnation of a mooted tariff change:

"They who advocate this change know just as much about the tariff as the old lady knew about fire insurance.

"This old lady visited an insurance office, and insured her barn for $3,500. The policy was drawn up, signed, sealed and handed over to her, and she put it in her handbag and started out.

"'But hold on, ma'am,' said the agent. 'I must ask you, please, for the first year's premium.'

"'The first year's premium?' said she. 'And how much will that be?'

"'There it is, ma'am, written on the policy,' said the agent. 'A small matter of $24.'

"'Oh,' said the old lady, 'I'm in a hurry this morning. You just let the premiums stand and deduct them when the barn burns down."

◆

He Knew.

Mr. Cholmondely Taliaferrò—Where are you going so early this morning?

Mrs. C. Taliaferro—I'm going down to have a new dress fitted.

Mr. C. T.—Shall I wait for you or do you want my night key?

◆

Overtasked Boy.

"Humor is lurking everywhere," remarked a man while waiting in a doctor's office; "and the moral to it all is that it's as easy to go through life with a smile on one's face as with a scowl. Take my visit to the butcher yesterday afternoon as an instance of humor coming unexpectedly. The boy who helps my butcher had evidently been promised a few hours' rest from work when the rush let up. At any rate, he was anxious to get away. When the counter seemed cleaned of goods he asked if there was any more work for him. 'You bet,' said the butcher; 'I want you to cut Mrs. Jones' chops, break Mrs. Smith's ribs, and saw off George Robinson's leg. That's all.' And yet we complain of the atrocities of soldiers in Tripoli!"

To Assist the Doctor.

Doctor Stewart was called to the telephone the other night, said a friend, to hear a cheerful voice announce that:

"On zhe way down to shee you, dock! Got fine case tremens."

Doctor Stewart recognized the voice as that of a rather well-to-do young man who had made several previous trips to Bellevue. He expressed over the telephone his strong regrets that he should be again bothered by the anticipant visitor.

"Thash a' ri', dock," said the voice through the 'phone. "I'm goin' co—hic—co—hic—cooperate wiz you zhish time, dock. Goin' make recovery, in quickesh time known." And he hung up the receiver. In half an hour or thereabouts a cab rattled in through the receiving gate and an annoyed driver helped out the telephoning person. By this time he was speechless. The driver dragged him inside.

"We shtopped at a wild-animal shtore," said the driver sourly. "That's why we're late. The patient here bought a lot of horned toads and garter snakes and things."

"But what for?" asked Doctor Stewart.

"He said he was thryin' to help yez," said the driver. "He says he wouldn't be able to shpeak by the time he got to the hospital—but he'd bring along samples of his symptoms!"

◆

The Relentless Critic.

"I suppose," said the official, "that you think our building regulations are the least efficient that ever existed?"

"No," replied the citizen who kicks, "I won't say that. Those permitting the construction of the tower of Babel must have been worse."

◆

A Matter of Observation.

"It was a clever job," said the chief. "How did you spot him through his woman's disguise?"

"I happened to see him sit down," replied the detective, "and noticed that he gave his skirt a little twitch with both hands, as if to keep it from bagging at the knees. Then I nabbed him."

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Catching the Smugglers;

Or, Frank Coke's Bravery

By William Ressman Andrews

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CHAPTER XI.

TAKING AWAY THE SAFE.

PETE tried to mollify his chief.

"Look a here, Moke, you oughter forgive an accident. What can't be helped, can't be helped. Now I sez wait till daylight, and then drag ther bottom for the box."

"Aye, aye," cried the others, feeling that was the best way out of it. It was so dark nothing could be done then, and they saw no reason for the men quarreling over something no one could help.

Therefore, Moke was prevailed upon to subside to reasonableness, and it was understood that the smugglers would come back in the morning to try to recover the box. Strange, no one seemed to realize in the excitement that the alleged safe had fallen in deep water. Perhaps if any one had thought of this feature of the case he would not have mentioned it. No one cared to listen to any more rages of their burly leader.

The last that the two on the shore knew of the smugglers, that night, the crew had rowed away in comparative calm, after the chief's first outburst. The last sound was heard, and Frank and Tom boldly walked along the beach. They were alone, and free from hinderance.

Frank turned to his companion. "The sooner the safe is removed, the surer we'll be of it," he said sententiously.

"Never a truer word spoken," responded Blakely. "Let's go back this minute, if we can find the place in the dark."

They hurried up the beach and entered the wood.

"It must be here," declared Frank, walking to what he supposed was the safe's burial spot. He dug the toe of his shoe in the earth, expecting to feel its soft, yielding surface, freshly turned by Pete's spade.

Instead, his shoe struck a rock. Again he kicked the ground. The results were the same. He then moved farther on and went through the same maneuver, but to his disappointment.

"Strange!" he muttered. "I thought this was the place, surely."

Before calling his companion in alarm, he wanted to make sure whether he could find the right spot, but after several trials he had to admit failure.

"Found the box?" called Tom, finally. "I've been looking for it, too, but can't seem to get back to the cache."

"No; not yet," replied Frank dubiously.

A consultation failed to bring them any nearer. Had there been any light to guide them in the quest, there would have been no trouble. Then they sat down.

"We might as well restrain our impatience," said Tom, "until the moon comes out."

"Sure thing; we almost forgot about that," assented Frank. "Nothing to get alarmed over, I'm sure."

While waiting they discussed the conversation they had overheard, and concluded that they were on the trail of a bad lot of rascals.

"No doubht the rest of the men would have schemed to carry off the safe, but it simply didn't occur to them," said Frank.

"No credit to the restraint of the others."

Time flew by without their noticing the lateness of the hour. The moon at last made its appearance. They greeted the first rays of its white brilliancy with exclamations of joy.

"Now for it," declared Frank.

Getting up, he surveyed their surroundings. A glance in the light was sufficient for him to find his bearings. "I see the place," said he to Tom.

The two then walked in the direction indicated by Frank's finger. They had wandered off a number of yards in the dark.

"Astonishing how far we went," said Frank. "I had no idea we were so many yards away."

They pierced the belt of woods, and found without any trouble the hole they had seen in the lantern light. A few steps away freshly-strewn earth betrayed the presence of the captain's hidden loot. Dick had scattered some brush over the spot. This precaution, however, failed of its purpose in the present instance.

Frank's eyes had seen beneath the branches the mica-like glitter of the fresh top-sand. He kicked away the brush, and began digging with his hands. This was easy, and he soon uncovered the iron safe.

"Get hold of one side," he said.

"All right," was the willing response.

Tom got down into the hole and took one end. Frank then gave a tug. The next moment they had the smuggler's hoard above ground.

"Come, we'll get away from here without delay," said Frank. "Now, I'll carry the safe till I'm tired. Then you can carry it awhile. We'll change off and on."

Plunging into the woods by the path they had taken on leaving the farmhouse, they finally came in sight of their hostess' domicile. At the fence of the pasture they halted for a consultation. The same thing seemed to be running in both their minds. It was so important it had to be settled before going a step farther. It was necessary for them not to be seen by any mischance.

"Explanations would be in order if somebody saw us walking along at this hour with a treasure-box," said Frank. "And how are we going to explain things to Mrs. Dunker and her sons?"

"Hum, that's so," admitted Blakely. "We can't make a clean breast of our being after smugglers, and tell the plans we have in mind for their capture. Without secrecy nothing can be done."

"All very true," agreed Frank. "But just suppose we were seen right now, for that matter, by our friends at the farmhouse, who have such great faith in us. They would wonder why we were carrying a small safe and hiding it without saying a word."

"Undoubtedly. Of course, when there were no complaints of such a loss they would know that we hadn't been robbing any of the houses. But it would set them thinking, to see us leave the house empty-handed for a walk and then return with a safe."

"We're in for it. Wonder what they would guess first?" asked Frank, curiously.

"No telling," responded Tom. "But as there is so much smuggling going on along the coast, they might decide that we were part of some gang of thieves."

"And a nice reputation for two respectable fellows like ourselves," commented Frank, indignantly. "Suppose the only thing left is to hide the safe under the ground near here, until we catch the smugglers and are ready to turn it over to the authorities."

"Yes; it would be fatal to give the safe to the keeping of the officers of the law at this stage of our game. We would have to answer too many questions. And of course the information would leak out. The smugglers would find everything, and get away before there was a chance to lay hands upon them."

"Let's bury it within sight of the house, so we can keep an eye on it."

This suggestion met with approval, but something intervened. They both had a sudden desire to see the contents of the safe. Perhaps it contained papers throwing light on the chief smuggler, and could be used in helping to convict him. But the combination was unknown to them. Well, after all, they would have to restrain their curiosity for the nonce.

Tom picked up the safe and put it on his shoulder and started down the road for a clump of trees the other side of the pasture. The watch dog barked, but no attention was paid to the animal.

On their way they went regardless. Still the dog barked. It was annoying to think that the animal would persist when he knew them.

"Hang it, I wish for once he wasn't so watchful!" said Frank, irritably.

If they had paid a little more attention to the character of the bark it would have set them thinking. Instead of the growl denoting an intruder, there was a joyous note in his tone, like that noticed in the bark of a dog that sees some one he knows very well.

The bushes near Frank and Tom parted quietly. A tall figure stepped into the road and gazed after them with a puzzled expression. Only for a moment the stranger stood there in indecision. The next moment he was stealthily following them, his eyes on the safe. This seemed to have a fascination for him. He keep looking and looking, and when he saw them turn in at the clump of dark woods, he cut across lots. He reached a point overlooking the spot selected for burying the safe, and watched silently.

"We're in another pickle," suddenly exclaimed Frank. "Got to have a spade."

"Sure thing; we can't dig into hard earth with our fingers," said Tom.

Frank started toward the farmhouse. "I'm going to see if I can get one from the shed close to the barn."

"They might hear you."

"Can't help it; must have a shovel of some kind," said Frank, with an air of finality, over his shoulder.

The next moment he was gone. Presently he returned with both a pick and shovel.

"Gee, I almost got caught!" he exclaimed. "The dog made a noise, but I managed to talk soothingly enough to him to shut up the beast." He handed the pick to Tom. "Now for the burial," he cried gayly.

His remark was loud enough to reach

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the ears of the silent watcher. "I'll be damned!" he muttered in amazement.

CHAPTER XII.

STRANGE LOOKS.

Quickly the two dug a hole large enough to contain the safe. Then it was covered over with earth. But they didn't rest with this. Frank cut sod from a spot a couple of hundred yards distant, and brought it to conceal the fresh appearance of the newly-turned dirt. After their labors were finished, Frank and Tom surveyed the work with feelings of complacency.

"Now to get these tools back in their places without being seen; and we to reach our room without getting cross-examined," said Tom.

Shouldering the shovel and pick he walked off. Frank was empty-handed. The tools were put in their places without any one watching, so they thought. But the man who had seen them dig the hole was now quite near them.

After stilling the dog's alarms, they got into the house without any of the family making their appearance. The door closed on them as they entered their room. But they were not aware of a figure stealing up the stairs quietly in their wake. It stopped outside their door and listened. As the hall was dark, he could stand there free from the danger of discovery. The transom was open, and he caught an occasional [illegible]d; still not enough to find out where they had obtained the safe.

The listener learned that it contained money—lots of it. His eyes opened wide with cupidity. He wanted its contents, and resolved to get the safe as soon as possible. Would he go right back to the hiding-place and dig it up? That was the principal thought surging through his mind as he stood tiptoe outside the door. But, on second thought, it was getting late, and there was plenty of time until the next night. So with the consoling reflection that he could wait with safety to his plans, he turned and disappeared in the darkness of the upper end of the hall.

His door creaked the moment he closed it after him, and Frank, remembering that the two farmer lads also slept on the same floor, poked his head out of his doorway and made a cautious reconnoiter. But he heard nothing more of a suspicious nature.

"Guess it's only the wind rattling a windowsill," he said to Tom. Presently they were in bed sound asleep.

At the breakfast table, three mornings later, Frank noticed the two farmer boys casting glances in the direction of a cousin who had come to visit them four days before. His name was Mike Gray, and he was a scion of a distant branch of the family. The two visitors had not taken very kindly toward him, because of a certain mysterious air. Then, again, he acted in a supercilious way. It offended them greatly, but they were careful not to betray any signs of irritation.

"I can't make him out," Tom had said to Frank, the night before. "He acts strangely. Seems like a man who carries a secret around with him, and is dying to tell it to somebody he knows would be shocked to learn what it was about."

"Yes, and I think he is a sneak," Frank had answered.

Now, at breakfast, it was noticed that the brothers looked at the cousin with expressions of severity.

"What can it mean?" asked Frank, after the meal.

"It's got me guessing," admitted Blakely. "Anyhow, I think he needs watching."

"If looks mean anything, that is evidently just what the Dunker brothers seem to think, also."

Frank was so puzzled over the reserved attitude maintained toward the cousin that he kept thinking of it all day. But so far, there was no solution.

Finally it lacked but two days before the Continental was to poke her nose in the harbor.

"We must go to the village and make everything ready for our trip to Cosmos Island," said Blakely. "We must get a boat, provision her, and conceal ourselves on the islet."

"Yes; and it will be a patient wait behind those rocks for our chance to cross to the smugglers' camp the first time their backs are turned."

The two separated, and later in the day Frank met Tom with a breathless agitated expression.

"For Heaven's sake, what's the matter?" asked Blakely.

"Everything's the matter," said Frank. "Our safe's been stolen."

"Hang it all, you don't say so!" exclaimed Blakely. "Who's taken it, I wonder."

"The Dunker boys," returned Frank.

"They, of all persons!" gasped Tom. "Explain."

"Yes; they've taken it, but they don't know it was brought here by us originally. It seems that Sam happened in the grove the night after we buried it, and heard sounds of digging."

"How did you find out?" interposed Tom.

"I just overheard the two brothers talking about it," said Frank. "They don't know I am aware of what has happened."

"I see; go on."

"Well, Sam discovered their cousin Mike digging away. From the description he gave his brother I knew that the cousin had found our cache. The two brothers concluded, after Sam and consulted with Gilbert, that there was some crooked work going on. At first they resolved to question Mike, but then decided to watch his movements; and also to give him a chance to say something. But he didn't. It looked suspicious. The boys then quietly dug up the box from the new hiding-place tne thoughtful Mike had prepared for it."

"This is making me woozy; but go on," interrupted his listener.

"That accounts for the way they have been acting toward him," continued Frank. "Naturally, not knowing his game, and finding him very secretive, they feel suspicious."

"Did you learn where the safe is now?"

"Oh, leave it to me," responded Frank. "And I've taken a walk to locate it. I can go right to the spot where the brothers hid it."

"Hum! changes all around," said Tom. "Let us go and dig up, the safe and hide it in a place where only we can find it. Can't let that get out of our hands until we're ready to disclose its history."

As it was still light, they did not dare take tools. But as the earth was fresh, they found it could be removed easily with a stick and their hands. With feverish haste they dug up their treasure-store. Then, with furtive glances, they carried it half a mile through the woods. Finding a desolate spot where no one had been for ages, it seemed, they cast about for a fitting place to hide the box.

Suddenly Frank espied a cliff whose sides had been blasted years before for building purposes. There were huge bowlders and half-finished stone blocks scattered about. In the cliff they discovered an opening. It was hardly the size to be called a cave; it was rather a wide fissure.

"I have it," cried Frank, as he was struck with an idea. "I'm going to put the safe in there"—pointing to the fissure—"because we need a change of luck. No earth hiding-places. Let's see if there isn't luck in stone." He laughed, to show that he was not seriously superstitious.

Blakely glanced at the side of the cliff and the surroundings.

"Yes; that's an excellent idea," he said. "There won't be any fresh dirt around to betray recent digging, after the box is put away."

They then secreted the box, pushing it back as far as their arms could reach. The chipped stone was piled all around it, top and bottom. When they finished no one would have suspected the existence of a box containing a small fortune in that deserted quarry.

"Now, to go back and make ready to leave for our trip to town," said Frank.

Supper that night was to be their last. The next morning Frank and Tom expected to leave for the village. Everybody seemed unusually silent. It did not seem on account of their proposed trip. There was something ominous in the air, they thought. This time the lowering looks of the Dunker boys were directed toward Frank and Tom; and there appeared to be a perfect understanding between the farmer lads and the cousin.

"Strange!" thought Frank. "Now we seem to be under a cloud. What's up, I wonder?"

Suddenly it flashed upon him that perhaps he and Tom were seen hiding the box. In that case, the Dunker boys would misunderstand their motives, not knowing how the box originally came on the farm.

The meal passed off with hardly a word exchanged between the party. Even Mrs. Dunker, usually chatty, was affected by the gloom hovering over the assemblage. She, good soul, had not been told what was on the minds of her sons, who, it must be said to their lasting credit, kept their suspicions to themselves as far as she was concerned, to save her alarm.

Supper over, Sam motioned quietly to Frank and Tom. With vague misgivings, they followed him away from the house and down the road. When out of sight and hearing, he turned and surveyed them critically from head to foot, not without a pronounced sneer on his face. The same kind of sneer was apparent on the face of his brother and the cousin, who had silently come after them down the road.

"Who are you?" asked Sam, abruptly, looking Blakely square in the eye.

The look carried menace with it, and Tom for a second wondered if Sam and his brother were not in league with the smugglers, and now had come to the conclusion that Tom and Frank were lingering at the farm for the purpose of spying on their movements.

"What's that?" retorted Blakely, sharply. "You needn't take that tone with me."

"I have reason to," said Sam, "until I find out more about you."

Tom's brow clouded.

"I am beginning to wonder who you are," he said, severely.

"Well, I'll tell you," yelled Sam. "I'm honest—that's more than you are."

"Take care, and don't go too far," cautioned Tom. "I might forget the hospitality I've received at your house."

"Never mind that," retorted Sam. "We took pains to get off our land, so that we could have our little say without any constrained feelings."

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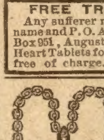

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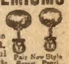

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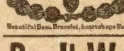

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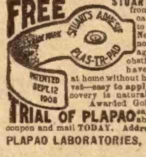

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"Explain the grounds you have for your peculiar accusation," said Tom.

He felt it best not to let his temper get away from him. It was necessary, also, to avoid suspicion, if possible. Nothing must interfere now with their plans of capturing the smugglers.

"I'll tell you my reasons," answered Sam. "We found some of your smuggling loot."

The last words explained Sam's attitude. He thought that Frank and Tom themselves were smugglers.

"Found some of our loot?" repeated Tom.

"Yes; my cousin here saw you bury a safe in the woods. At first he said nothing. He dug it up and put it in another place. We discovered him at it and for a time thought he was mixed up in some shameful business. But he confessed his part. Then we found out the real culprits."

"So you think we are smugglers?" said Tom.

"Yes; and furthermore, we've foiled you again."

"How so?" asked Frank, with genuine feelings of curiosity.

"My brother and I took the box from the spot where Mike buried it, and put it in a hiding-place where no one knows its location except ourselves," said Sam, triumphantly.

A gleam appeared in Blakely's eye. Sam's words meant quite a revelation. Tom and Frank saw the siutation in a flash. The Dunker boys were not aware of Frank and Tom's visit to Sam's supposed secure hiding-place, and little dreamed that the safe was again in the possession of the ex-castaways.

Frank was troubled with a disturbing factor in the situation, however. He, with Tom, saw how impossible it was to convince the three young men that their unknown visitors were in no way connected with smugglers—unless a clean breast was made of Tom and Frank's affairs, and that was out of the question.

The only thing that he could hope for was to gain time while he and Frank were able to engage and provision a boat. Then, before the alarm was raised, they would set out from Hank's Island for Cosmos.

"If we can only get down to town ahead of them," he breathed,

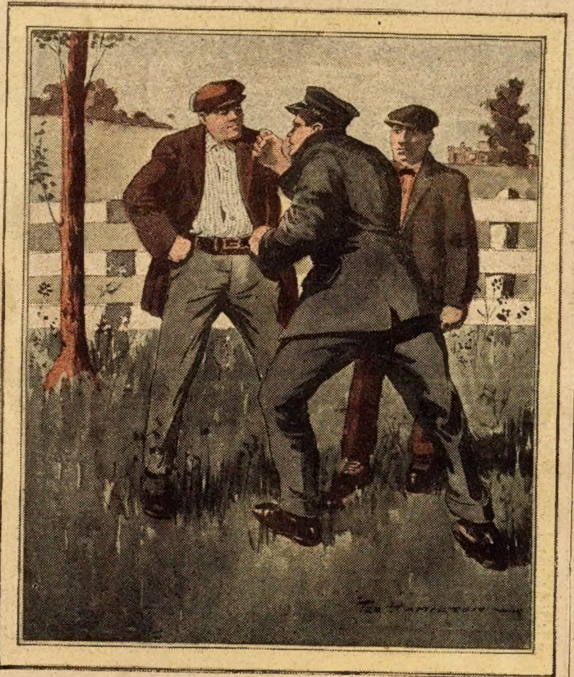
With this thought in mind he spoke up.

"Now, see here, Sam," he said, in mollifying tones, "you're all wrong on this matter. It's a mistake, and I can prove it to you."

"Will be only too glad," said Sam, who liked Frank and Tom, in spite of his suspicions, and was ready to believe them straight, if they could furnish ample proof of their integrity.

"Will you believe me when I say that we found the box ourselves, after it had been planted by smugglers? I'll show you where we got it."

The story seemed absurd, but they were given the benefit of the doubt. Frank then led the way back to the beach. On the way he managed to let Tom know that he did not intend to divulge their secret, and explained the real scheme he had in his mind for their escape.



"I might forget the hospitality I have received!"

Frank told how he and Tom had seen the smugglers and the two traitors act, the night the box was stolen. But there he stopped in his narrative. The holes in the sand seemed to confirm everything he said. Yet Sam wanted more proof.

"Well, then," said Frank, "if we're smugglers, we naturally would want to use the money in the box, wouldn't we? On the other hand, if we are not, isn't it reasonable to suppose we would be willing to go with you before a magistrate and hand over the box?"

Frank had not said that he intended to do any such thing, and if his listeners should misunderstand his words that was their lookout.

"Will you come back to the farm, dig up the box with us, and help take it to the town for an officer's inspection?"

"We'll go right back to the house with you," returned Frank, quickly. As this answer seemed an implied assent to his question, Sam felt content so far.

It was really Frank's intention to lull their suspicions on the way back, then to lag behind with Tom, and when close to the stable. He remembered there were only two horses on the farm. If he and Frank could manage to jump on the animals' backs without warning, and get away, they would have several hours' start to the town at the other end of the island.

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00 and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

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M. Jusserand then told a story about a Frenchman at a Fourth of July picnic who found fault with the American cooking at the picnic feast—the soggy pastry, the tar-flavored ham, and the moist, heavy cake.

"Why, monsieur," said a young lady. "I thought we Americans had improved immensely in our cuisine. Look at our fashionable restaurants. All their menus are now printed in French."

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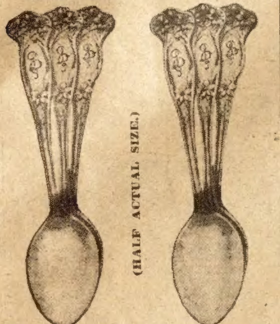
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Jealous of Herself.

(Continued from page thirteen.)

even a half-breed. Puntos eyed him suspiciously. The masquerader—for such he appeared—had his hand on the handle of the door, and in another second would have entered. Turning, he caught the native's eye fixed penetratingly on him. He pulled the plate-shaped hat over his eyes, turned on his heel, and fled. Puntos followed at a safe distance.

Many and devious were the roads poor Puntos had to thread to keep the artful Spaniard in view, without being detected. For a while he had to walk very fast to keep up. But once on the principal thoroughfare the man stopped and gave a low whistle. Another man stepped out from an archway, leading a pony. The Spaniard mounted and leisurely rode on.

For hours, it seemed to Puntos days, he doggedly followed, until footsore and weary, it seemed he would have to turn back. Finally they arrived, by a circuitous route unknown to Puntos, at the old palace behind the hills. The poor Filipino, satisfied of the destination of the man, dropped wearily down under some low shrubbery.

The opening of a big gate sounded faintly on his ears. He waited and listened for it to close. Then he must return. Instead of a closing gate he heard voices coming nearer. He crouched lower in the short scrub bushes. Nearer and nearer came the voices. Then Puntos, looking up, saw three Spaniards grinning maliciously down at him. The man he had followed was no longer guiltily slinking along, but stood in a commanding attitude.

"Take that hound," he said, pointing to the wretched native, "and put him in a cell where there are plenty of rats. Give him no food until I give the order. I'll teach him to frustrate my plans and then follow me for twenty-four hours."

The Spaniards laughed mockingly, for they recognized Punto Puntos as the dog of a Filipino the American officer had rescued from their sports. Puntos was cast into the first yawning cell they came to, and the poor wretch sank almost lifeless on the stone floor.

CHAPTER XIV.

That night while Punto Puntos lay in anguish of soul and body, Captain Bradley mustered his little army for an attack on the old palace walls. Celasquex, in a savage rage at his defeat, relaxed somewhat, and his disorganized followers, taking advantage of the occasion, imbibed hilariously. The attack was planned for immediately after dark. Celasquex was taken unawares. But though blinded by drink and surprise, they fought like savages.

Bradley had scattered his men all around the building, but after they had obtained a complete victory over the rebels, and the search for Celasquex was begun, it was found that he had got away. Bradley was furious, but a search of every nook and corner failed to unearth the wily Spaniard. Putos was dragged from his cell more dead than alive. As soon as the meaning of his release was made known, he fell on his knees before Captain Bradley imploring to be taken back to the hospital.

Then he told with excited gestures of his recent adventure, and of his fears for the life of Jerome. When all attempts to find Celasquex failed, Bradley began to think it was possible that the assassin had returned to Manila to carry out his hellish plot.

He hurriedly ordered the poor wretches who had been Celasquex's prisoners to be released. After watching Puntos eat and drink, the Captain had him placed on a pony, and then ordered an escort and a quick march.

The palace and the rebel prisoners were left in charge of Major O'Donnell, a red-hot incorrigible of civilization, who confessed later that his thirst for blood had been quenched on that night for all time.

Captain Bradley could not help wondering, as he watched the deathlike face of Puntos, who was urging his pony on, whether there was any real cause for alarm. He thought of that other ride when Puntos led the way.

There was a weight at his heart as he thought of Celasquex and what deviltry he might be up to. Puntos was looking more than ever like a death's head. Bradley feared he might collapse.

He offered the lad his flask, but Puntos shook his head and pressed forward. After the most agonizing ride, they finally reached Manila. Down the familiar street he had recently traversed at the heels of Celasquex, Puntos' speedy little pony almost flew.

As they entered the big paved court at the hospital entrance only the Filipino's keen eye saw a cloaked figure enter from the opposite side. Puntos rolled from the pony's back, and instead of entering by the door, flew with the swiftness of an arrow to the windows of the Doctor's apartments. He knew that on such a warm night it would be open everywhere. Without quite knowing why, Bradley followed the native. With a bound he reached the window where he had seen the boy go through.

The sight that met his eyes for a second paralyzed him. Standing over the sleeping form of Jerome Fairchild stood Celasquex, arm uplifted, a long knife gleaming in the half-light, in his tightly clenched hand.

"That's how I kill my enemies!" he hissed diabolically, seeing nothing but the sleeping face.

The knife was suspended halfway to Jerome's heart, when Puntos, with the agility of a wildcat, threw himself on the sleeping man and received the knife wound in the center of his back.

"Caramba, you devil's imp!" yelled Celasquex, raising the knife for a lunge at Jerome.

All this had happened in a few seconds. Like a wild beast Bradley sprang upon the Spaniard. A deadly struggle ensued. A few minutes later Ferguson was aroused by Jerome. He found Celasquex bleeding to death from a wound, and Bradley raving savagely with a broken arm. His well hand pointed to the dead body of Puntos, the faithful Filipino who had given his life to keep his promise to the Firehead.

(Concluded next week.)

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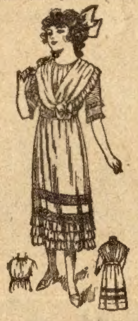

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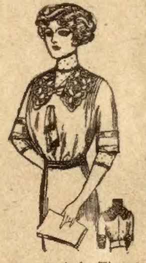

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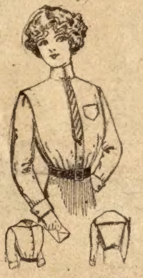

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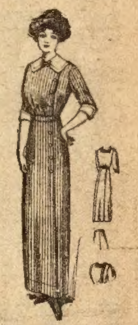

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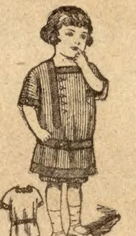

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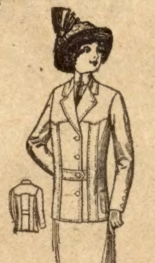

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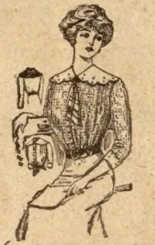

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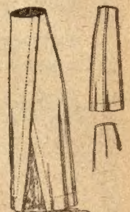

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THE FAIRY CORNER

THE LILY.

By the side of a beautiful lake there grew a lily of the valley plant. Though every year the leaves came up bright and green there were no flowers, and the plant felt sad. She worked hard every year in the hope that she might have a string of beautiful white bell shaped flowers waving above her, but every year as the young buds came up they withered and died.

One day as the plant was spreading her leaves in the sunshine she heard a patter of tiny feet and saw a wee elf come limping through the woods with a broken wing and an injured foot. The elf was limping along as fast as he could, and no wonder! Behind him hopped a great ugly toad. The lily plant was grieved when she saw the elf hard pressed and she called out: "Oh, come, and I'll hide you, you poor little thing!" The elf heard the lily's voice and ran and climbed in among the leaves of the plant, which immediately wrapped them around him so that he was concealed from view. Up came the toad, hoppety-clump, looking much amazed and wondering where the elf had gone. He searched the woods for yards around, but was not able to find his victim, and at last he gave it up and hopped away.

Then the lily plant opened back her leaves and the elf lay there in the sunshine till his wing was healed and his foot was hurt no longer. At last, when he was well enough to go home, he bade farewell to his kind friend and protector and asked the lily plant if there was anything he could do. Then the lily plant told him that every year, to her sorrow, her blossoms were blighted, and the elf said: "Oh, that's easily arranged. I'll give you not only blossoms but magic blossoms."

With that he skipped three times around the lily plant singing magic words. When the song was finished he spread his wings, said good-by and flew away.

You can imagine how eagerly the lily plant tended her buds the next season and how joyful she was as the stalk grew tall and straight and the little white bells began to develop. At last they were ready and the lily plant could hardly sleep, she was so eager to see how they would look in the sunlight. When the next day came and the first ray of the sun touched them there came a sound like the ringing of silver bells, for each blossom was provided with a magic clapper that swayed to and fro and made music.

With evening came a still more wonderful thing. At moonrise six tiny fairy children ran out from of the woods. Each one bell and put it on her he Then all joined hands and circle around the lily plant, singing, with voices like the ton bells. Soon they were joined b pany of elves who ran out f the trees, and they danced feasted on honey till the showed that day was ne party broke up. The fairy the flower hats on the lily all said, "Good morning," to bed.

Seven nights the fairies and danced in the moonlight and no ha came, but on the eighth night wh should come hopping but the great toad that had chased the elf long before. He came up so softly that the faries did not hear him and when he saw how many of them there were he smiled to himself and hopped softly away with the night. Soon he came to a dark tunnel in the ground, down which he made his way. It led by winding routes to a great cave in the earth, where the king of all the toads was holding his court. The cave was nearly full of toads—old toads and young toads, large toads and small toads—but all of them wrinkled and cross looking.

Into the midst of this assembly the toad pushed his way and from the steps of the throne he told of what he had seen. When the toads heard what a beautiful dance the elves and fairy children were having they croaked all together as with one voice: "Quick, let us go catch them!"

The toads had always wished to catch fairies and elves to keep in their dark underground cave, for they were slow and lazy and wanted somebody to wait on them. So far they had not been able to catch a single fairy or elf, and they had been obliged to wait on themselves, which had made them cross. So when they heard that a whole company of elves and fairy children were alone and unprotected they at once sallied forth to the capture. Quietly they moved through the dark forest and formed a great circle around the dancers, who kept on with their merrymaking, for they did not know that the toads were there.

The fairies had just decided to have a game of tag and had hung all the lily-bells back on the stalk, when, with harsh croaks, the toads made a rush at them from all directions. The fairies were in terror. In whichever direction they tried to run a great toad barred their path.

They might all have been caught and taken down to the dark cave where the toads lived if it had not been for the lily plant, which trembled so when she saw their danger that she set all the lily bells to ringing. When the birds of the forest heard the bells ring they thought it must be sunrise and time to get up, and when they found it was still dark they flocked around the lily plant to see what was the matter. They soon found out, and in two minutes the toads were scrambling home as fast as they could hop. So the fairies and elves were saved, and danced happily ever afterward.

◆

OLD MR. HUMBUGG.

Old Mr. Humbugg dwelt alone
  In Bugtown, by the sea,
And every one considered him
  As rich as rich could be.

He was a most respected bug
  In Bugtown, by the sea,
Till one day some one saw him steal
  Some sugar from a flea.

Of course he was arrested,
  For it is wrong to steal;
You can't imagine how it made
  Old Mr. Humbugg feel.

Now Mr. Humbugg looks real sad,
  As sad as sad can be.
But you'll admit it serves him right,
  For he's a thief, you see.

◆

A Lesson in English.

A consul of the United States in one of the French seaports was asked to preside at an examination in English at a municipal school.

"Jean," asked the teacher of the head pupil, eager to show him off before the American, "Jean, you will conjugate the verb, 'I have a gold mine.'"

Jean arose, floundered mentally for a moment, then plunged in.

"I have a gold mine; thou hast a gold thine; he has a gold hisn; we have a gold ourn; you have a gold yourn; they have a gold theirn!"

The consul was speechless with astonishment at the progress the French children had made in the English language as it is never spoken at home.

◆

A Swim in the River.

A mare in Philadelphia tried to imitate George Washington and cross the Delaware River, but the men that were taking care of her would not consent to the imitation. She jumped off the gang-plank on which she was boarding a steamer when the whistle of the boat was sounded unexpectedly, and the men who were leading her jumped into a rowboat and made after her. She led them a merry chase before they could catch her, and then she almost tipped over the boat before they could get her to swim back to shore.

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